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Haute école de gestion
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The impact of Social Media Influencer's (SMI) on the buying decisions of Generation Y

**Bachelor Project submitted for the degree of
Bachelor of Science HES in International Business Management**

by

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Declaration

This Bachelor Project is submitted as part of the final examination requirements of the Haute école de gestion de Genève, for the Bachelor of Science HES-SO in International Business Management.

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Geneva, 3rd June 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Farzana', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Executive Summary

This research aims to analyse how social media influencers on Instagram influence the purchasing decision of Millennial consumers in the luxury watch industry in Swiss Romandie. The first part of this project discusses different elements surrounding influencer marketing and Millennial's online buying behaviour. The second part investigates Millennials' presence on social media and their relationship with influencers. The data collected in the analysis show how influencers impact the purchasing decision of Millennial.

By combining the findings, the analysis and the literature review, it can be seen that Millennials are aware of the growing trend on influencer marketing on Instagram. Influencers in the fashion and lifestyle category are most followed by millennial consumers. Several key factors of attachment and affinity with influencers were derived from this analysis. For instance, style and physical appearance, aesthetic or similarities are among the drivers that attracts a follower to an influencer besides age and gender. Influencer are also seen as a source of inspiration for Millennials who look up to them for new ideas and inspirations on a daily basis. Safe to say they follow them as role models.

Moreover, findings show that most of the Millennials trust influencers. However, this does not always lead to purchase behaviour as Millennials are vigilant and reluctant. Research show that Millennials have real interest in luxury, however not all of them can afford it. There is a fine line between bridging this gap, and it can be deduced that over time luxury brands would realize that a huge potential market is still untapped as some millennials are unable to afford the product even when they follow the influencer on social media.

Furthermore, findings show that influencer marketing allow brands to increase their awareness by giving them more visibility and reach a vast audience. Research suggests that a blockbuster influencer would preferably be used for awareness while a micro-influencer for conversion. Choosing the right type of influencers for the right target audience will help luxury watch brands to boost their awareness and visibility and eventually increase their sales. However, in order to fully support these findings and hypotheses a deeper quantitative and qualitative study in necessary.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context

With the evolution of technology, the internet has drastically changed our lives and has digitalized it. Today when in need of information, we first look for it on the internet before looking for it elsewhere such as in books. Our lives are shaped by the way technology is evolving. The twenty-first century has seen a huge shift from traditional marketing to Social Media marketing. The concept of marketing goes back to the Industrial Revolution in eighteenth century. At this time with the technological innovations, mass production of goods was created to respond to people's needs (History Cooperative, 15.11.2018). Not only did humans find a better way to make products, but they also had to find ways to inform people about them.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) defines marketing as, "the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably.". Marketing helps businesses to sell a product or a service to its target customer by finding out customer's needs and desires. It's no longer about "telling and selling" but about "satisfying customer needs" (*Principles of Marketing (POM)*, Kotler, 6th Edition, p.29). We all already know a lot about marketing without even knowing it. Marketing comes to us in traditional forms as defined in the *Principles of Marketing* as advertisements on TV, billboards, magazines, mailing lists, and newspapers. These traditional marketing is evergreen and have always been there depending on the target market or "a specific group of consumers at which a company aims its products and services" (*Entrepreneur*). For instance, we will always see a section of the global population, mostly Baby Boomers (aged between 54-72 years old) read newspapers. However due to globalization and the digital phenomenon that has captured the world we live in, over time conventional marketing is going out of fashion and doesn't necessarily work. People see a lot of things during a day and when they go to bed, they forget about the 500 advertisements that they have seen on posters, billboards, magazines or even on TV. TV advertisers for example says that they need to show an advertisement about 7 to 10 times in order for people to remember it (*Influencer Marketing*, D. Brown & N. Hayes p.19).

In recent years, new ways of marketing approaches have been developed "from imaginative websites and mobile phone apps to blogs, online videos, and social media" (*Principles of Marketing*, 6th Edition, p.29). Marketing is part of our lives in everything we do. These new approaches aim is to reach people "directly, personally, and interactively" (*POM*, Kotler, 6th

Edition, p.29). In other words, the goal of marketers is to be part of our lives by making us live through their brands.

Having said that, digital marketing has surpassed traditional marketing over the last decade. In the United States according to *Statista*, marketers estimated that spending on digital marketing would go up by 12.3% in 2019 while spending on traditional marketing would decrease by 1.2%. This shows that there is a huge shift in the marketing world. Following this trend of digitalization, we cannot ignore the phenomenon of Social Media that plays an important part in a consumer's purchasing decisions. Social media defined further in this study is websites and applications that allow people to communicate with others and share content. With 2.77 billion users worldwide, social media has taken over our lives in last 10 years and is expected to reach 3.02 billion users by 2021 which will represent almost one third of the global population (*Statista*). There is no way companies can deny this trend. While traditional marketing still exists and is still effective, it is however important to know whether it will "make your product popular among your target market" (*Lyfe Marketing*, 20.07.2018).

Social media creates opportunities for businesses to promote their products and services on a larger scale as people use internet for their daily activities including buying products and services. One of the reasons why digital marketing is growing, as cited in *Lyfe Marketing*, is because people find you instead of you making the effort to look for them. More businesses are taking the opportunity to invest in digital ads since it's easier to target the audience and later change it if needed. Social media comes with a range of websites and applications that allows people to interact with each other and businesses with their customers. Over the last decades, many social media networks (SMN) were launched. No one can ever forget the launch of Facebook in 2004 and since then it has "made ads a part of its revenue model" (*Sophie Dagnon, Mavsocial*, 18.10.2017). Between 2014 to 2016, the spending on social media ads grew from \$16 billion to \$31 billion as stated in *Mavsocial*. This shift is due to the fact that social media enables businesses to connect with their target audience like never before considering the large majority of people spend a lot of time on the internet, mostly Millennials (aged between 23-38 years old) (*Lyfe Marketing*, 20.07.2018).

Social Media Networks (SMN) such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat have taken over print marketing for brands to endorse their products and services. Opportunities are not only taken by brands but are equally taken by people. You can market yourself on social media and become a brand yourself. A person who successfully brands themselves is called an influencer. An influencer is someone who can influence you, who has the power on your purchasing decisions because he/she is "one of your customers". An influencer "has a following in a particular niche, which they actively engage with" (*Influencer Marketing Hub*).

They are hired for a short period of time in contrast to “brand ambassadors” who are hired for a longer period of time (Chen, Artplusmarketing, 07.11.2017). Investing in influencer marketing generates brand awareness and boosts sales by 67% according to 90% of the 600 professionals surveyed over Europe and USA in 2018 by a study done by *Launch Metrics* (LM). Where can these influencers be found? Even though Facebook is the most used Social Media Network with almost 2.3 billion active users monthly as of January 2019 (Statista, 2019), it is on Instagram with 1 billion active users that brands should consider as the ideal platform to opt for influencer marketing. Although there is a difference of 1.3 billion with Facebook, “it is much more engaged, making it a more effective way for brands to get their message seen and heard” (Influencer Marketing Hub). This is because 91.9% of the influencers choose Instagram as their main platform compared to 2.1% who choose Facebook (Influencer Marketing Hub). Influencer marketing has been growing exponentially since 2016. According to *Mediakix*, influencer marketing is expected to grow (5-10\$ billion) by 2020. This is mostly because 92% of the people trust the recommendations made by people, who they follow on social media (Katie Carlson, Expert Voice). Fashion brands, beauty brands and even luxury brands have opted for influencer marketing. While luxury brands took time to get into social media such as Rolex who only opened an Instagram page by the end of 2015, it became a necessity for these brands to get into it as 47% of Millennials make their buying decisions based on social media’s influence (Kateryna Muravyova, Luxury Society, 15.11.2016).

1.2 Issue definition

With this trend taking over traditional marketing, it is important to understand how it works, and, what makes it more successful than traditional marketing. We know that social media networks are used by the global population on a daily basis and that people use internet as their primary platform for information. However, in recent years, with the evolution of technology, the way businesses promote their products and services has drastically changed and has been digitalized. Influencer marketing is used by brands to reach a larger audience and attract them. While we see a positive return on investment (ROI) with this strategy, it is necessary to understand how influencers help businesses to acquire customers and sell their products.

Who are these influencers and how do they manage to build a relationship between themselves and their followers? Why do people follow them? How can influencers have an impact in the purchasing behavior of people? Research has shown how Millennials use social media in their everyday life, and how companies turn to social media influencers to promote

their products. In this study, we will try to understand the interaction and the bond between influencers and consumers by focusing on the high-end luxury watch industry in Switzerland. We will also focus on how trust is built between companies-influencers and influencers-consumers. Finally, this study will help us to understand if luxury watch brands mainly and almost only use this specific marketing strategy and how much more they could benefit from that shift.

1.3 Plan/organization of the thesis

The first part of this study is to identify who the influencers are and why brands choose them to endorse their products. The second part is to see how consumers get attached to these micro-celebrities, and how and why they follow these influencers. We will also see how these influencers impact consumer's purchasing behaviors. Finally, this will help us know if the luxury watch industry should implement this growing trend in their marketing strategies. The study will be done on the luxury watch industry and focused on Swiss Romandie consumers.

In order to do so, we will mainly focus on the Swiss Romandie population geographically especially Millennials as they are to be, in the future, the largest spending population globally. We will interview them and make a survey that will help us to answer questions related to social media influencers and the way they influence the buying decisions of that generation. We will focus on the luxury watch industry, specially Piaget. As there are many social media networks, we will mainly focus on Instagram, a picture-based platform that influencers use the most.

2 Literature review

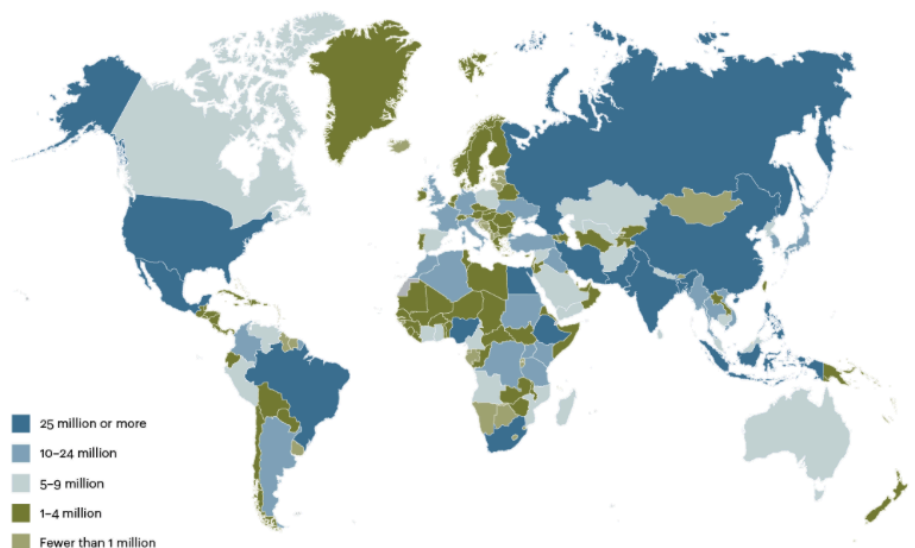
2.1 Main concepts

2.1.1 Generation Y or Millennials

There are a lot of debates when it comes to defining Millennials by age, so it is difficult to decide which years to take into account in order to do so. According to *Millennial Marketing*, “Millennials are born between 1977 and 2000”. In a 2013 *Time* magazine article, they describe Millennials as “people born from 1980 to 2000”. *Pew Research Center* defined Millennials as people born between 1981 and 1996 which means in 2019, they are aged between 23 to 38 years old. This study will be done by taking the age range defined by *Pew Research* for Millennials. They are the last generation that was born in the 20th century. As of 2018, Millennials are a group of 1.8 billion people which is almost a quarter of the world population. In 1994, they took over Generation X to become the world’s most populous generation (*Financial Times*, 06.06.2018).

Figure 1: Global Millennials

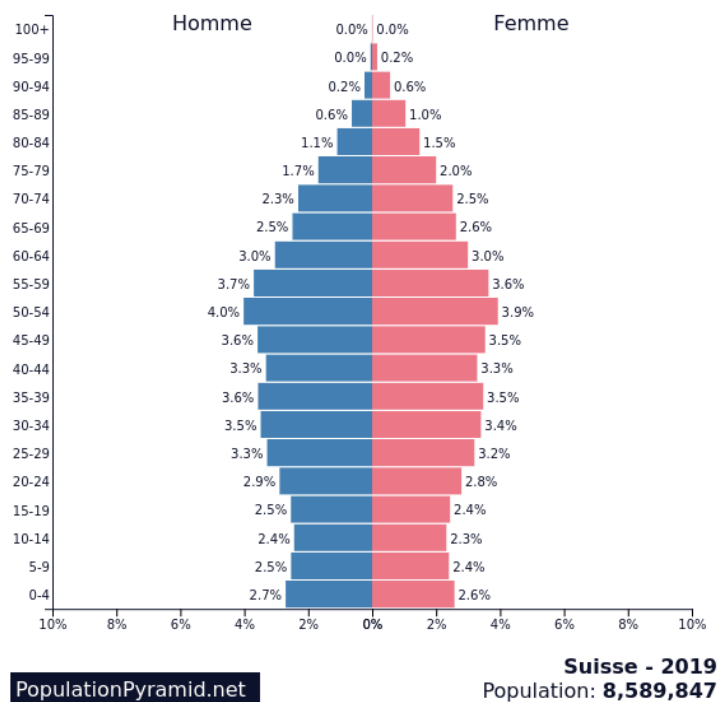
Global Millennials are located in the world’s largest countries, with the greatest concentration in Asia



Source: *UN World Population Prospects 2015; A.T Kearney analysis*

Globally Millennials are located in the largest countries such as India, China, USA or Brazil whose Millennial inhabitants' number is more than 25 million (Figure 1). It is interesting to see that most of the global Millennial population lives in Asian countries which could be explained by the fact that these countries have much larger number populations compared to European countries. China is the second most populous Millennial country with 27% of its population being Millennials. This could be mainly due to the one Child Policy that was introduced in 1970s to reduce their population (AtKearney, 07.2016).

Figure 2: Swiss population by age in 2019



Source: *PopulationPyramid.net*

In 2019, Switzerland counts about 21% of its population as Millennials (Figure 2). With a population of only 8.5 million people, Millennials are only about 1.8 million of the total population. In Switzerland, the case is different compared to India for example where people have on average 2.3 children (World Population Review). The Swiss natality rate has decreased over the years as people have less children. However, the number of old people is growing constantly. Having 21% of Millennials in its borders and being a leader in the luxury watch industry, Switzerland's luxury watch and jewellery brands cannot ignore this group of consumers.

Even though, they are categorized in an age group, there are a lot of differences and similarities to be considered within any generational cohort. According to *Pew Research*, a research done in the United States, 50% of Generation Y or Millennials are more educated compared to their parent's generation or grand-parents'. They are technology savvy and have seen the evolution of the internet, they have been using computers since their childhood. As such they have witnessed the development of social media having been exposed to it since childhood. These facts help them to understand and adjust quickly and easily to new technology. Millennials have seen the evolution of Social Media, so "they are generally comfortable with the idea of a public internet life." (Margot Rouse, WhatIs, 02.2019). They are a large majority present on Social Media Platform. They become so dependent on social media that they have affected many aspects of "consumers identity formation, their expectations regarding service, formation of habits, engagement with brands and firms, participation in value co-creation, brand loyalty, purchase behavior and lifetime value, and (ultimately) the value of the firm." (Emerald Insight, 30.10.2013). In other words, they start influencing more and more the decisions made in a company from production to selling. "Brands recognize the arrival of the "era of Millennials," who not only are about to become the largest spending generation in history, but also confidently re-define the vision of luxury." (Kateryna Muravyova, Luxury Society, 15.11.2016). In a study by *Deloitte Digital*, about the digital influence in retail, they indicated that 47% of Millennials make their buying decisions under the influence of social media (2017). In order to stay up-to-date and on trend, brands have no other choices than to turn to online influencer partnerships.

Millennials like spending money for outings, food, travel. However, in the last decades with the evolution of social media platforms, the broad use of internet and abundance products available, they have started to be cautious when deciding to buy a good or a service. Before deciding to buy a product or a service, Millennials look for reviews on the internet and will compare prices and quality. Marketers should therefore think of new and different strategies to stand out and to sell their products to this generation.

2.1.2 Social Media

Today Social Media (SM) has become a big part of people's lives. People use it on a daily basis "to connect with friends and family, to catch up on current events, and, perhaps most importantly, to entertain" themselves (History Cooperative, 2019). As of January 2019, there are more than 2.6 billion active social media users worldwide (Statista, 2019). But what is social media? It is described as "websites and applications that enable users to create and

share content or to participate in social networking.” (Oxford dictionaries). Another definition is “websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone” (Cambridge Dictionary). There are many definitions on the internet but almost all of them have one word in common: “share”. Social media allows people to share their content. Social media comes in many forms such as blogs, pictures, applications, websites, videos.

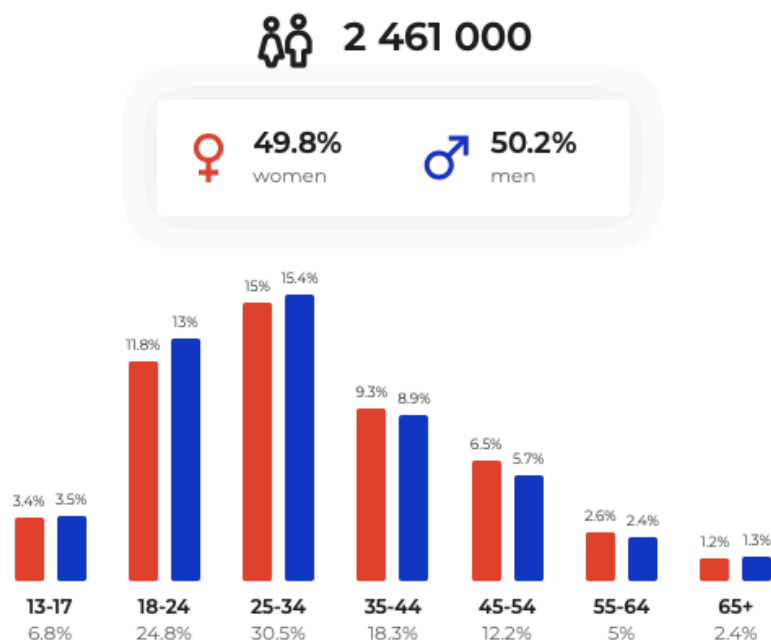
The beginning of social media goes back to the beginning of the internet in the 1960s and 1970s. It is clear that without the internet social media couldn't exist. However, according to *History Cooperative*, the first websites being credited as social media were “Six Degrees” created in 1997 and “Friendster” created in 2002. Both websites allowed people to build a personal profile and add individuals to their personal network. On Friendster people could “share videos, photos, and messages with other users, and they were also able to leave comments on other people’s profiles, so long as they were part of each other’s personal network” (History Cooperative, 2019). These two websites were followed by LinkedIn launched by the end of December 2002. While the two others were more personal websites or for entertainment, LinkedIn is a professional social networking site where people can connect with their colleagues and other business associates. LinkedIn is helpful when it comes to searching for a job and building a professional network. With 239 million members today (Digital Unite, 09.01.2019), LinkedIn is the place where a lot of recruiters go to look for talent. Over the last fifteen years many other social network sites were launched. One of the most known is certainly Facebook which was launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. Since its launch, Facebook has revolutionized social networking sites. With more than 2.3 billion active users monthly, Facebook is the most popular social media in this world (Statista).

- *Instagram*

Since its launch in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, the social media platform has gained millions of followers. As of April, Instagram counts 1 billion of active users by month (Statista).

Instagram’s growth has been phenomenal since its launch. Acquired by Facebook in April 2012, two years after its launch, for \$1 billion, Instagram at that time had only 30 million users (Kurt Wagner, Vox, 09.04.2017). On a daily basis, Instagram counts 500 million active users who share about 400 million of stories and upload more than 100 million of photos and videos daily. It counted about 50 billion of photos shared in September 2018 (Salman Aslam, Omnicore, 06.01.2019). Today, the photo sharing platform is popular among Millennials’ men and women (Statista, 2019).

Figure 3: Instagram users in Switzerland, October 2018



Source: NapoleonCat

Switzerland counts about 2.4 million Instagram users in its territory as of October 2018. This is more than a fourth of its total population. The majority of the users are men and Millennials 30.5% without counting the percentages of people from 35-38 years old. In every age range, the difference between male and female users is very slight. The highest difference is seen in the age range of 18 to 24 where men dominate women by 1.2% (Figure 3). In Switzerland, Instagram is the fourth most used social media by Millennials. They use it on a daily basis and 13% of them use it more than 3 times a day (EY, 2017). The reasons why they mostly use the photo sharing platform are for entertainment (76%), and because the platform allows them to share their everyday life with their followers by sharing photos, videos and stories (EY, 2017).

Instagram is an excellent platform for influencer marketing. In fact, in a survey by *Linqia*, 92% of the marketers surveyed, say that Instagram is the best platform for influencer marketing (Eileen Brown, ZDNet, 03.01.2018) even though Facebook is the platform with most followers. One of the reasons why brands choose Instagram to market their products is because it is an excellent platform to share photos and nowadays users tend to respond and engage better with pictures than they do with text. This platform allows users to take photos or videos of their daily lives and share it with their followers. They “relate to these pictures, making it easier to convert users into customers.” (Salomé Charté, Digital Value Blog, 02.11.2017). Moreover, the platform shows a higher interaction rate compared to any other social media platform. In fact,

about 92% of influencers also believe as marketers that Instagram is the best platform for influencer marketing against 2.7% of them who chose Facebook (Influencer Marketing Hub). Regarding the luxury world, 35.8% of professionals believe that Instagram is the platform to develop influencer marketing (Launch Metrics, The State of Influencer Marketing, 2018).

2.1.3 Definition of influencer marketing

The beginning of influencer marketing goes back to 1890, when Nancy Green (storyteller, cook and activist) was hired by R.T Davis Milling Company to promote their pancake mix called "Aunt Jemima." Santa Claus, introduced in 1931 by Cola-Cola, is probably the most popular influencer known worldwide. Before that, he was represented in many different ways (Grin, 09.03.2019). It was in the early 2010s that this term went in other directions. While Nancy Green promoted the pancake mix on posters and billboards, the influencers in 21st century have social media networks as platform to promote products and services.

In the last ten years, influencer marketing has been defined in many ways by scholars, writers and marketers. Some define it as "the art and science of engaging people who are influential online to share brand messaging with their audiences in the form of sponsored content" (Cat Lincoln, Influencer Marketing for Dummies, 2015). For others it's a mix of both old and new marketing tools by using celebrities who endorse the products on social networking sites. But what is an influencer? An influencer in a is defined as someone or something that could influence (Cambridge Dictionary). It comes from the verb "influence" which means "to affect or change how someone or something develops, behaves, or thinks" (Cambridge Dictionary). An influencer in marketing and business is defined as "an individual who has the power to affect purchase decisions of others because of his/her authority, knowledge, position or relationship with his/her audience." (Influencer Marketing Hub). Duncan Brown and Nick Hayes in their book about influencer marketing describes an influencer as "A third-party who significantly shapes the customer's purchasing decision but may ever be accountable for it (2008)." In other words, an influencer has the ability to affect your decisions in any field.

A lot of research shows that in order to attract customers and to get through to them, companies have turned to influencer marketing. Influencers can endorse anything from fashion to beauty to daily products, and this is because "regular people relate better to influencers, who look and live like them. Unlike celebrities, influencers are accessible people. This makes it easy for brands to get in touch with them for collaborations." (Influenz, 18.05.2018). Many companies started from nothing and by using social media became highly successful. One such company is Daniel Wellington, a watch company which started its business on social

media only (Digital Value Blog, 02.11.2017). Currently, influencer marketing is an industry of \$7 billion and is expected to grow in 2020 to \$8 billion (InfluencerDB, 21.11.2018). In Marketing, there are 4 types of influencers (Influencer Marketing Hub):

- *Celebrities*

First of all, there are the “Celebrities” also called macro-influencers who could be anyone who has a career in entertainment or sports. Over the years, brands have used many celebrities as “brand ambassadors” to endorse their products (Influencer Marketing Hub). L’Oréal, the cosmetics brand has many celebrities of all ages and ethnicities to represent their brands on advertisements and on many platforms such as at Cannes Film Festival. Roger Federer has been a brand ambassador of Rolex for many years. While he finally managed to break the record of Pete Sampras Grand Slam record, he was wearing a Rolex watch while lifting his trophy (Aksharit, 18.01.2019). Celebrities give a lot of exposure and visibility to brands, but they are costly because their fanbase is huge.

- *Industry Experts and Thought Leaders*

Secondly, there are “Industry Experts and Thought Leaders” who have experience, qualifications and who are experts in their fields. These people could be journalists, academics, industry experts or professional advisors or writers (Influencers Marketing Hub). Having a journalist or a writer in a magazine talking positively about your products is considered to be influencer marketing.

- *Blogger*

Thirdly, there are “bloggers and content creators”. A blogger is a person who writes content for a blog which is like an online journal in reverse chronological order. The platform allows the blogger to share their views and opinions of a subject. They post on various topics such as art, fashion, food, lifestyle, travel (Oji Djuraskovic, Firstsiteguide, 09.04.2019). The origins of blogs go back to the early 1990s. People first used to make them to share their personal thoughts and photos. Millennials in France and Swiss Romandie saw the launching of Skyblog, now called Skyrock, in 2002. While in its early stages, weblogs were mostly used for personal purposes, but they now used by many for business purposes. A blogger through a blog can build a brand for him/herself. It allows him/her to talk about a product and give his/her opinion about it. This is particularly valuable because people nowadays use online reviews before making purchase decisions. According to a study by *Statista*, in the third quarter of 2017, 36% of people between the ages of 25- and 34-years old look for online reviews before buying a product or a service. The largest group of people who look for reviews and product research

are aged between 55 to 64 years old (Statista, 2017). Bloggers in that case do have an impact on the buying decisions of customers. They allow businesses to stay connected to their audience, boost traffic to their website; and mainly quality leads to convert (Oji Djuraskovic, Firstsiteguide, 09.04.2019). Currently, there are more than 400 million blogs which cover almost every niche sector (Cat Lincoln, Influencer Marketing for Dummies, 2015).

- *Micro-influencers*

The final category is micro-influencers, who are normal people who became known for their work and have a niche audience with whom they are deeply connected. They are expected to have between 10'000 and 500'000 followers. They can work in any field from health to beauty to fashion. New studies show that micro-influencers are changing the influencer marketing industry. They use many platforms to connect and engage with their followers. However, 59% of micro-influencers believe that Instagram is the best platform to connect with audience (Eileen Brown, ZDNet, 06.09.2016). Micro-influencers can help brands in many ways. When brands decide to collaborate with a micro-influencer, they already know his/her audience with whom he/she has already established trust. Working with them assures brands to have a better ROI (Return on Investment) as there is more engagement with the audience compared to a macro-influencer (celebrity) who has more followers (Barrett Wissman, Forbes, 2.04.2018).

Influencers can be found on many social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Pinterest or YouTube. Each platform has its own advantages and disadvantages. The platform where most influencers can be found is Instagram with 78% of influencers worldwide in January 2018 (Statista). Instagram is indeed the favorite platform for influencers to do brand collaborations. As of November 2018, there are more than 550'000 active influencers of Instagram with 81% of influencers having between 15'000 and 100'000 followers. The topic which has more sponsored posts on Instagram is Fashion with 25% of sponsored posts followed by food with 12% of posts (InfluencerDB, 21.11.2018).

In a research conducted by *Launch Metrics* in 2017, out of 600 professionals in the luxury industry, 78.2% of them implemented influencer marketing in their marketing strategies. This is a jump of at least 13% compared to the previous year. For 76.4% of them, Millennials are the targeted audience. About 42% of them claim that influencer marketing is implemented to launch a new product against 28.1% who used it for different events. The majority (40.5%) of professionals have used less than 10% of their marketing budget in influencer marketing in 2017 against only 5.1% who have used more than half of their budget for that. In the future, 60% of marketers are expecting to increase their budget. When it comes to measure the

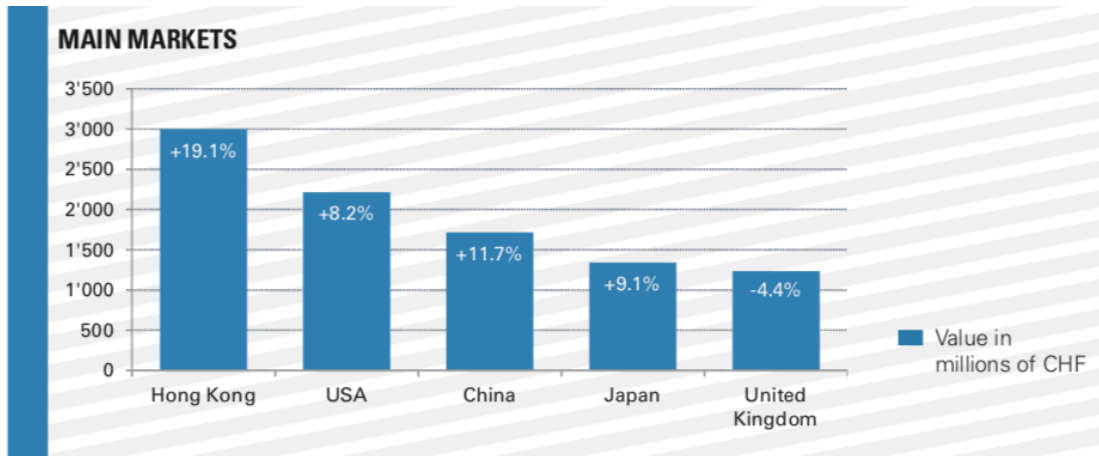
effectiveness of influencer marketing, for 25.8% of marketers' engagement is the KPI followed by their increase in website traffic.

When collaborating with influencers to promote products or services, brands need to set their KPIs and goals. While statistics show that influencer marketing is used by marketers, it is however difficult for brands to determine the profit made out of influencer marketing. In fact, in a survey made by *Linqia*, in 2017, it is showed that 76% marketers still struggle to measure the Return on Investment (ROI) of influencer marketing, however some KPIs such as engagement rate, clicks, conversions and reach are cited by them to measure it (Linqia, 2017).

2.1.4 Swiss luxury watch industry

Contrary to what people believe, Switzerland isn't the first country which made small clocks that could be carried. It is in fact in Germany, between the years 1505 and 1530 that small clocks were created by Peter Heinlein. The Swiss watch industry began during the religious revolution in France which prosecuted many Huguenots. Those people fled to Switzerland, mostly in Geneva, with their clocks and their knowledge in watch making. However, during John Calvin's time, wearing jewellery was forbidden in Geneva. By the end of 17th century, people started to know Geneva for its watchmaking knowledge. In the 18th century, it was Britain who was known for their pocket watches and their inventions. During this time in Switzerland, many watchmaking businesses started to be flourishing in the Jura area. Daniel Jeanrichard is the founder of the watchmaking industry in Jura who manage to export more than 60'000 watches by the end of 18th century. In 1800, Switzerland managed to make more than 2 million watches, however at that time quantity took over quality and Swiss watches were mocked by Americans when they wanted to sell them. After this scandal with Americans, in the early 1800s Pierre-Frédéric Ingold, a swiss watchmaker, developed "machinery to produce plates with sinks and jewel seats, machines for barrels and even more watch parts" which helped Switzerland to be known for its quality watches and their skills (Richard, Firstclass Watches, The history of Swiss watch industry part one, 31.07.2015). Pocket watches were famous for few centuries. It's in 1869 that Patek Phillipe first introduced the wristwatch which "was designed for the Countess Koscowicz of Hungary" (Richard, Firstclass Watches, The history of Swiss watch industry part two, 10.08.2015). Since that moment, Swiss watch industry has been rising and been known to the world for its innovation and quality of products. Many luxury companies were created since then such as Rolex and Piaget in 1874.

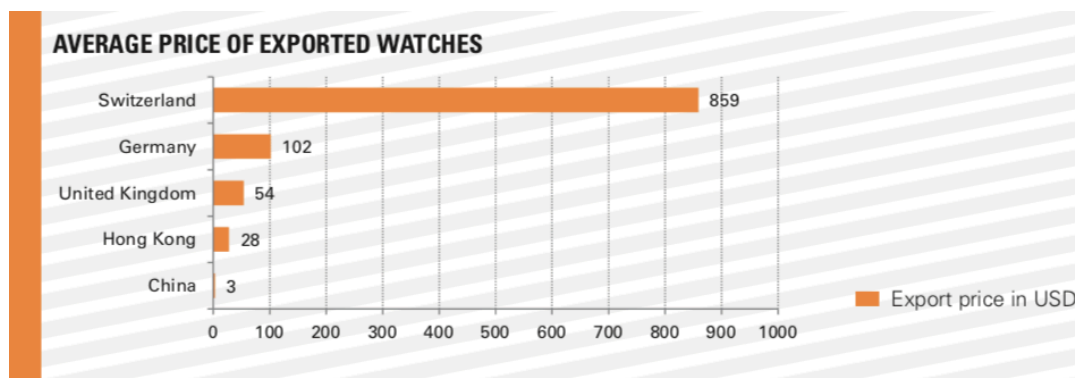
Figure 4: Swiss watch exports markets in 2018



Source: FHS, 2019

Switzerland is not only known for its chocolates but also for its watches. Rolex, Omega, Chopard, Piaget and Patek Philippe are a few of the luxury brands that are known worldwide. In 2017, Rolex was the most valuable Swiss watch brand worldwide at 7.2 billion swiss francs (Statista). Switzerland has been exporting watches since 18th century. It is the leading watch exporting country with a worldwide value of CHF 21.2 billion in 2018, 6.3% higher than 2017 (FHS,2019). Among the five main exports markets, three of them are located in Asia. Hong Kong is the main market of swiss watch industry followed by USA (Figure 4).

Figure 5: Average price of exported watches, 2018



Source: FHS, 2019

Even though Switzerland is the leader in the export of watches in terms of value, it is China who is the leader in terms of units with around 700 million of wristwatches exported in 2018. It is followed by Hong Kong, with 204 million of wristwatches (FHS, 2019). Hong Kong exports

its watches but is also the biggest customer of Swiss watchmakers. Switzerland is the leader in terms of value as the average price of their exported watches is \$859 USD compared to Hong Kong which average price for exported watches is \$28 USD. China arrives in the bottom of the list with an average price of \$3 USD per exported watch (Figure 5). This is perhaps because of the price difference between a luxury watch and a fashion watch. Rolex is indeed world's most valuable watch brand. It is followed by Omega and Patek Phillippe (Statista, 2016). Among those watch brands, some are also expert in jewellery such as Piaget.

Switzerland is still in the first place when it comes to sell luxury watches. Today Baby-Boomers and Generation X are the main customers of luxury brands (Deloitte, 2017). However, it is Millennials who are the future customers of these watch companies. Studies show that Millennials are spending more and are more interested in luxury items such as watches (Deloitte 2017). In a study by *Deloitte Digital*, about the digital influence in retail, they indicated that 47% of Millennials make their buying decisions under the influence of social media (2017). Therefore, in order to attract them, luxury brands should invest in digital marketing such as influencer marketing.

3 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

3.1 Survey (quantitative)

3.1.1 Methodology

The purpose of doing a survey was to understand and see if and how social media influencers affect their followers in their buying decisions as well as to see if there is some kind of relationship built between both parties. There was also at the end of the survey a few questions regarding people's interest in luxury goods in general and then luxury watches. It has 24 questions divided in two sections. The first section stops at question seven where respondents have to submit the survey if they answer "no" to that question as the following questions are for people who answer "yes". The survey was written only in English, and it was sent to respondents over a period of one and half months in order to gather quickly as many responses as possible. The objective was to have at least 150 answers in order to have a clear view for the analysis. At the end, there were 156 persons who answered this survey. The link was sent by email, by WhatsApp, and by Facebook Messenger. The message sent with the link stated that it was only for Millennials living in Swiss Romandie, and if not, then they must not answer it. This survey was organized in different parts that will be discussed in "questions organization".

3.1.2 Questions organization

The first part of the survey was about the personal information of the participants. This would help to have a demographic view for the analysis. The questions were about their gender, their age, their level of education and employment status. The answers would help to build different profiles and understand better how they perceive social media influencers and their interest on this and on luxury brands.

The second part of the analysis was made in order to know if the respondents were present on social media, if they use any social media platforms from questions 5 to 7. Question 5 was about the social media platform they use. Here respondents had the possibility to choose all the answers and also add their answer in "others". There was also the possibility to answer "none" if the respondent isn't present on social media. Then at question 6, they were asked if they had ever heard about influencer marketing. At question 7, the survey was divided in 2 sections. Respondents who do not follow any influencers would have to submit the survey after

answering the question as the following questions were directed to people who follow influencers and who are present on social media.

The third part, questions 8 to 10, was the respondent's involvement with social media influencers. Question 8 was about the platforms on which people follow influencers. Here, they also had the possibility to choose multiple answers. The next question was about the categories in which participants would put their three favorite influencers. This will help to understand which category of influencers are more successful among Millennials. It is always interesting to know how people get to know about the influencers they follow. Whenever people look for something on the internet, for example "brown shoes", it happens that within the next few minutes, they see advertisements of shoes appearing on their social media. Websites use cookies to track their visitors or customers habits. The same thing happens on social media such as Facebook or Instagram. On Instagram for example, if the user likes or looks for a photo or video related to football, therefore on his/her Instagram feed videos and photos related to football and sports will appear. In the same way, people can discover influencers. The answers were specifically chosen to see at this stage of the survey if respondents were influenced in any-way.

The fourth part of the survey from questions eleven to seventeen was about the attachment and trust that the respondents have with influencers and to see if this had an effect on their buying decisions. Question eleven's purpose was to know why people follow influencers and if there are any signs of attachment. This question helps to understand if numbers of followers, content or attractiveness has its importance for people when it comes to following an influencer. Some people are more content sensitive and look for good content in order to subscribe to a page or to follow someone. The number of followers is also an important aspect here. Some people will follow an influencer because of his/her numbers of followers. Number of followers determines someone's popularity and people automatically tend to think the more someone or a page has followers, the better is that person or that page. Attractiveness plays a key role when it comes to having a lot of followers. Influencers take a lot of time to have the perfect feed that would attract people and brands. Attractiveness could be shown through how a person carries and presents him/herself through his her/her posts, thoughts, opinions. Some of the questions were built on Likert scales which help to ask questions about a topic that measure the level of agreement and disagreement of a participant and "so tapping into the cognitive ad affective components of attitudes" (SimplyPsychology, 2008).

The fifth part of the survey was from questions 18 to 22 which was about participants interest in luxury products and in general and luxury watches in particular. As this study is focused on the luxury watch industry in Switzerland, it is therefore important to know how much a person

is interested in luxury products. Question 21 was asked to know if respondents own any luxury watches priced over 3'000 CHF. According to the *Federation of the Swiss watch Industry*, a watch is considered truly luxurious when it is priced over 3'000 CHF. Here the goal was to see how many of these Millennials already own a luxury watch. Question 22 was focused on influencer marketing and luxury watches. Here, the goal was to see if people would consider buying a luxury watch at a more affordable price, between 2'000 and 5'000 CHF than the usual price range at which a particular luxury brand sells their watch. Depending on the answers, it will give a clear view of if luxury brands should have a line of products more affordable for those people.

The survey finishes with two general questions. Question 24 was made in order to know what has a greater influence on the purchasing decision of participants, if they are influenced by any people or brands. The final questions were to know how people prefer to buy products promoted on Social Media; if they prefer to have a direct link to the website with purchase option or if they prefer to go to the store.

Doing this survey helped to gather data to analyze. It was successful as the target number of answers was achieved. However, 21.7% of the participants answered "no" to the question 7 and submitted the survey. At the end, only the remaining 79.3% was taken into account for the analysis. This would help to understand in influencers have power on the buying decisions of their followers and if this would benefit the luxury watch brands.

3.1.3 Difficulties encountered

Doing a survey requires a lot of time and effort. Every question has to be organized well and in a definite order without any gap. Behind every question there should be a defined goal. While doing this survey, the difficulties encountered were to find the right questions to ask by having in mind the objective of the research and the hypothesis. Before starting to create the survey, a lot of research was done regarding social media influencers, Millennials and the luxury watch industry. At first, the survey consisted of 30 questions and was then reduced to 24 questions by keeping in mind the time frame of two to five minutes maximum. It was sent to five persons for their opinion. Many suggestions came out of this and were taken into account to make changes. For example, at first the survey didn't have any sections. Respondents who answered "no" to question seven, were forced to keep answering to questions which weren't relevant for them. The survey was divided in two at question seven where respondents have to submit the survey if they answer no. It was then sent again to these five persons and four new other persons. One of the people found that the order of the

questions wasn't coherent. Final changes were again made, and the survey was then sent to people to be answered. When doing a survey, it is difficult to gather answers. At first, it was sent to friends, family members, relatives and colleagues. About 90 answers were gathered easily within two weeks. For the remaining answers, the same people were asked to send it to people in their circle. Within one and half months 156 answers were gathered.

3.2 Qualitative research

3.2.1 Methodology

Qualitative research allows researchers to know more in depth and helps to understand “underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations” (Snapsurveys, 16.09.2011) to a given question. It's generally done with a small sample and the respondents are usually chosen based on the target audience. The purpose of this qualitative research is mostly to understand and highlight the reasons why the sample follow influencers and the connection they have with them. It will also allow us to know their perception about influencers, how they see them and if influencers have any influence on the buying behavior of Millennials' consumers. The sample was selected based on their age and if they follow any influencers. Eighteen Millennials living in Swiss Romandie were interviewed regarding influencer marketing. The purpose of the interview was explained to the interviewees just before starting. Their oral approval to use their answers and names for this research was taken. The questions were organized in a way that will allow the participants to answer the questions smoothly and in a logical way. A part of the questions was similar to the ones asked in the survey, however here, interviewees could answer them in depth with their own thoughts and opinions.

3.2.2 Questionnaire organization

The questionnaire was separated in four parts (Appendix 3). The first part is composed of general questions that would help to know if the interviewee follows any influencers. Interviewees were asked if they follow any influencers and what the term “influencer” means to them. They were asked if they follow any influencers and how frequently they follow them. In order to have more details, they were asked to name two of their favorite influencers and to tell the sector that they cover (Q4, Appendix 3). This will give an overview of the type of influencers (micro-influencers, macro-influencers, celebrities) Millennials follow and the sectors that are the most followed or that have the most interest in them. Is it important to know that channel that interviewees use to follow the influencers? This will show which platform has

more popularity among target audience of this research. Interviewees were then asked to talk more in detail about how they get to know about the influencers they follow. If they saw their photo or profile randomly, or through a collaboration with a brand or if someone has suggested them.

The first of the second section, which was about connection and attachment to influencers, started with two questions (Q7 and Q8, Appendix 39) related to time. The purpose was to know for how long they have followed the influencers and if they will keep following them in the future. This will give us an idea about the connection built between followers and influencers and if there is any kind of attachment that links both parties. Interviewees were also asked to answer if they regularly check the profiles and if they interact with them by commenting on their posts. Question 10 purpose was to determine if followers can judge the personality of the influencers through what they show to people. This will help us to understand if personality plays in making a connection. People tend to connect easily with others with whom they share similarities or someone easy to approach. Question 11 asked interviewees to answer if they feel any connection between themselves and the influencers, if they idolize them or if they see them as someone friendly with whom they can get along. After the connection is made “trust” can be established. Trust is important in every relationship. It is important to know if trust is built between followers and influencers in order to know if this will lead to the follower to purchase the product.

The third part is about was about the purchase behavior. Participants were asked if they would buy any products endorsed by their favorite influencers. This will give us information why respondents will buy or not buy a product promoted by an influencer. They were then asked if they have ever bought anything endorsed by an influencer on social media and how do or have done so. By knowing that, we can make assumptions that the respondents could also buy in the future or not. As this study is on the luxury watch industry, there was one question that was asked to interviewees regarding luxury products in general. The goal was to know if they had any interests in luxury products and if they would consider buying a product endorsed by an influencer. Finally, the respondents were asked if they prefer buying online or in store a product that they have seen on social media.

The last part of this qualitative research contains only one question. It is about the general opinion or thoughts that interviewees have regarding “influencer marketing”. This question will give us detailed answers that will help us to understand how people see influencer marketing and how they react to it.

3.2.3 Difficulties encountered

The difficulties encountered while doing the qualitative research is mostly time. In fact, the goal was to interview at least 50 Millennials, but due to time management, only 18 people were interviewed. The preparation of the questionnaire took time as it has to be organized in a way for respondents to answer smoothly and naturally. Moreover, it was important to interview different types of Millennials starting from the age of 24 to 38 with different backgrounds. At first, the interviews were recorded with interviewees approval, however putting them in transcript required a lot of time, concentration and motivation. The eighteen answers are only an overview of the research as the sample is very small and it does not represent the targeted audience. More qualitative researches should be conducted in order to make the assumptions and determines the different factors that shows the connection between followers and influencers.

3.3 Interview with Piaget

3.3.1 Methodology

The purpose of the interview with Piaget was to understand how luxury watch brands work with influencers and if they already use this type of marketing or not. It was also to better understand how they see influencer marketing and its place in the luxury watch industry compared to traditional marketing. A list of questions (appendix 2) and the Bachelor Research Proposal were sent to both participants, Mrs. Susanne GELORMINI (Social Media & Content PM) & Mr. Sharannath Mohanram (Digital Media Lead) at Piaget SA. A second list of questions (appendix 1) with a few questions from Appendix 2 was made for the Skype interview that took place with both the participants. Some questions were asked during the interview based on the participants answers. At the end, the analysis of the information gathered during the interview will help to understand luxury watch brand's (here Piaget) views on influencer marketing.

3.3.2 Piaget questionnaire organization

3.3.2.1 Appendix 1

The first question of Appendix 1 that was sent to both participants, is a general question about the term influencer. This question will help to know how they describe the term "influencer" and

what it means to them. The second question was focused on the term “influencer marketing” and was given with an example of trust with numbers for the future. Here participants were asked to give their opinion about influencer marketing. The third question was asked in order to know if Piaget would turn to this kind of marketing or if they already use it.

Each brand has different target audience, and they use different marketing strategies from traditional marketing to digital marketing to attract them. If a brand is selling dish washing soap, then it would turn to traditional marketing such as TV advertisements to target its customers who are most likely adults, with families or single people living alone. It will most likely target more women than men as there is a perception that women do more household work. The case is the same with luxury brands, they have a niche customer segment that they are trying to reach. The case of the fourth question was to know which customers do Piaget target with influencers. As Millennials are the future biggest consumers, it is important for any brands to take them into consideration. In question number 5, Piaget was asked about their plans for Generation Y and how they would target them. The sixth question was focused on the platforms that are best suited to target Millennials for Piaget. Not all customers are found on every platform. If a brand’s target customer for a particular product are adults aged between 50 and 60 years, then they wouldn’t go on Instagram and do advertisements there as Instagram is mostly used by younger people.

The seventh question was about Olivia Palermo, who is part of Piaget as a brand ambassador. The goal was to know why they chose her, and which customer segment do they target with her. Question number 8, was about the different types of influencers that exist, and the criteria used by Piaget to select them. Some brands consider working with micro-influencers who have between 10’000 to 100’000 followers, others consider working with celebrities. Here also, criteria depend on the brand’s objectives and goals. The final question was a general question about influencer marketing in the future, in 10 years and where Piaget see themselves with this strategy.

The answers collected from this questionnaire will help to understand better the use of influencer marketing for Piaget and for luxury watch brand in general. The survey will give information from the customer’s perspective about influencer marketing and the relationship between customers and influencers. This questionnaire will give the brand’s perspective about influencer marketing and how they use it.

3.3.2.2 Appendix 2

Some of the questions for the Skype audio interview were prepared in advance and can also be found in Appendix 1. Qualitative research helps to gather detailed information. Participants have the opportunity to answer the questions in depth and in their own words, whereas in a survey, they have to choose an answer from the options given to them. Open-ended questions give opportunities to respondents to share their point of view. A qualitative research such as an interview helps the researchers to ask spontaneous questions based on the participants answers.

Questions were asked about the respondent's general knowledge about influencers. Then, they were asked if they think digital marketing would take over traditional marketing. This question will give a view on how they see digital marketing in the present moment and in the future. The next questions were the target customers on Social Media. As mentioned before, brands have to choose the platforms they use compared to their target audience. Piaget works with established celebrities as brand ambassadors such as Michael B. Jordan (actor), Jessica Chastain (actress), Olivia Palermo (entrepreneur and business woman) who have millions of followers and who are famous. The objective with the question 4 was to know if Piaget would ever consider working with micro-celebrities (people with 10'000 to 100'000 followers) as they are also a type of influencers as 45% (Launch Metrics, The State of Influencer Marketing) -of luxury brands consider micro-influencers to be more effective than celebrities.

Question 6 was asked about the reach and visibility that influencer marketing gives compared to traditional marketing such as TV advertisements. Each marketing strategy has its own purpose and use based on the target audience. The objective of this question was to know if there is a possibility that brands turn more to digital marketing such as influencer marketing than traditional marketing for more visibility and awareness. In a study by *Launch Metrics (The state of Influencer Marketing in Fashion, Luxury and Cosmetics)*, 35.8% of luxury brands believe that Instagram is the best suited platform for Influencer marketing. The purpose of question 7 was to know respondents' opinion about that. The following two questions, 8 and 9 were about Piaget and influencer marketing strategy in 10 years from now and general opinion about influencer marketing. Finally, question number 10 was the ROI (Return on Investment), if influencer marketing boost sales and if it has a positive impact on sales.

The answers gathered during this Skype audio interview will help to analyze influencer marketing from the point of view of a brand. Some spontaneous questions were asked based on the participants answer to have more depth information and more details.

3.3.3 Difficulties encountered

The difficulties encountered while preparing this interview was to find the right questions and balance them. The questionnaire was organized from general questions to more specific questions and finishing with general questions. Some researches have to be done in order to prepare the questionnaire. Furthermore, it was important to keep in mind the time frame and not make it too long. The communication with both the participants went well. However, to fix a date and a time took time as both the participants have a busy schedule. Finally, while preparing an interview, it is important to know the subject well and have enough knowledge to back up during the interview. For that, a lot of research such as articles had been done prior the interview.

4 FINDINGS/RESULTS

4.1 Survey analysis

This survey was answered by 155 persons in total living in Swiss Romandie area. Although there wasn't any specific question asking the location of the respondent, it was made sure that in the message that was sent to people with the link, it was mentioned that it is only for those living in Swiss Romandie. Moreover, in the description of the survey the same message was stated. Among those 155 answers, two were deleted as they were not Millennials.

Table 1: Survey respondent's profile

Profile	Category	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Gender	Women	87	56.9%
	Men	66	43.1%
Age	Millennials	153	100%
Educational level	High school	2	1.3%
	Diploma	29	19%
	Bachelor	68	44.4%
	Masters & higher	54	35.3%
Employment status	Student	41	26.8%
	Employed	88	57.5%
	Unemployed	16	10.5%
	Self-employed	8	5.2%

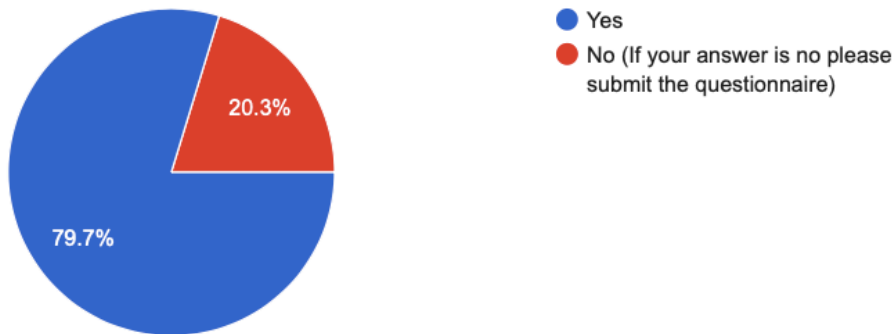
Among those 153 respondents, 56.9% are women and 43.1% are men (Table 1). All the respondents are Millennials aged between 23 and 38 years old because in the message before starting the survey, it was mentioned that this survey was for Millennials. It is important while doing any survey to ask for the education level of the participants as it helps to understand if education has an impact on their answers and how they see things. The majority (about 44.4%) of the respondents are doing a Bachelor or obtained a Bachelor's degree. It is followed with 35.5% by a Master's degree or higher education such as PhD. Only 2 persons stopped their education after High School. Regarding the employment status, 57.5% of the participants are employed and 26.8% of them are students. It is interesting to notice that 5.2% of them are self-employed. This analysis gives us an overview of the respondents' profiles and further it could be seen if it has any impact on the results and decisions.

Table 2: Social Media platform used by respondents

Social Media platform	Gender	Number of respondents	% of respondents	Total respondents	Total % of respondents
Facebook	F	83	54.2%	137	89.5%
	M	54	35.3%		
Instagram	F	79	51.6%	134	87.6%
	M	55	36.0%		
Twitter	F	13	8.5%	20	13.1%
	M	7	4.6%		
Snapchat	F	40	26.1%	66	43.1%
	M	26	17%		
LinkedIn	F	29	19%	82	53.6%
	M	53	34.6%		
Pinterest	F	16	10%	17	11.1%
	M	1	1%		
YouTube	F	35	22.9%	63	41.2%
	M	28	18.3%		
None	F	1	0.7%	3	2%
	M	2	1.3%		

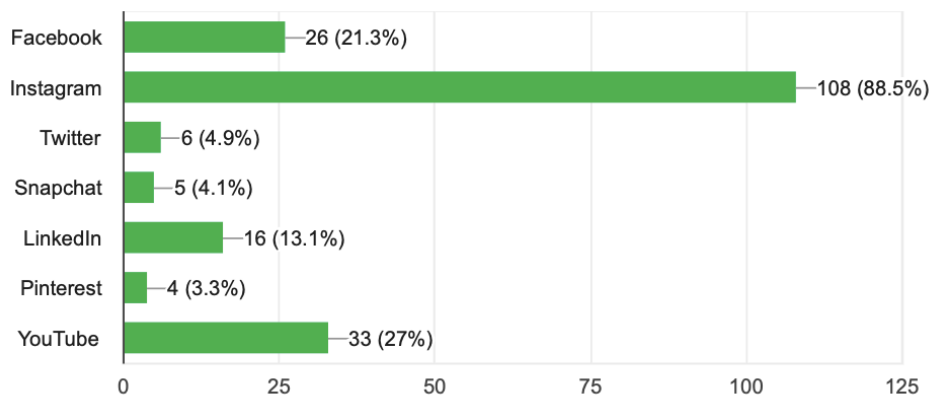
As this research is on influencer marketing on Social Media, it is important to know which Social Media platform(s) is/are used by the respondents. Above (Table 2) shows that among the 153 respondents, the majority of them (89.5%) are present on Facebook. Among those 89.5%, the majority is female users (54.2%). Instagram follows with 87.6% of respondents using it. It is also interesting to see that 51.6% of them are women. As this survey was mostly answered by women (87 out of 153), it is therefore relevant to have such higher results for women. The third Social Media platform used by the respondents is LinkedIn by 53.6%. LinkedIn with 562 million users (Izea.com, 06.08.2018) is mostly used by professionals to connect with stakeholders and people and to broaden their network. Unlike Instagram or Facebook, LinkedIn has its own influencers who “have some evidence such as longform posts or articles on a specific topic or demonstrable experience in a particular industry to back up their influencer claims.” (Izea.com, 06.08.2018). It is interesting to see that Swiss Romandie Millennials are not very present on Twitter and Pinterest. Globally Facebook is ranked number one with more than 2 billion active users and Instagram fourth with 1 billion active users (Statista). The majority of Facebook users, 32%, are aged between 24 and 34 years old, so are the majority (32%) of Instagram users. This shows that Instagram and Facebook are two of the most used and liked platforms by Millennials.

Figure 6: Respondents following influencers



Question number 6 was about the term “influencer marketing” and the purpose of it was to know if respondents have heard about it. Only 6.5% of the respondents had never heard about the term influencer marketing which represents 10 persons out of 153. Question 7 was about the number of respondents who follow influencers on Social Media. 79.7% of the participants (122 people) follow influencers while 20.3% do not (Figure 6). The respondents who answered “no” had to submit the questionnaire after question 7, as the following questions were not relevant for them. This shows that even though people are on Social Media, they are not all following influencers. Their buying decision is thus not affected by any influencers. Businesses should therefore focus on other marketing strategies to attract these people.

Figure 7: SM Platforms where respondents follow influencers



Among the 122 respondents who said that they follow influencers, the majority (88.5%) of them follow them on Instagram, followed by YouTube. Is it surprising to see that only 21.3% of them

answered Facebook while Facebook is the platform that is most used globally and most used by respondents of this survey (Figure 7). Even though, Facebook is the most used social media platform, the picture-based platform (Instagram) is indeed influencers' favorite platforms as 78% of them could be found on that platform as of January 2018 (Statista) and this number is expected to grow in the future. In Switzerland, 76% of the population aged between 25-34 use Instagram for entertaining and 71% use it to share their photos, videos, stories and news about themselves on this platform (EY, 2017). Instagram is thus the platform where more of the people follow influencers.

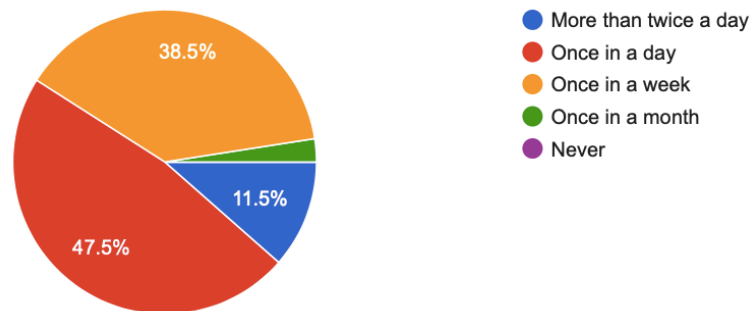
Table 3: Respondents 3 favorite influencers by category

In which category would you put your 3 favorite influencers?			
Category	%	Category	%
Fashion	63.9%	Food	33.6%
Lifestyle	49.2%	Travel	23.8%
Fitness	49.2%	Music	21.3%%
Sports	34.4%%		

Question 9 was about the category in which respondents would put their three favorite influencers. It is important to know the category as this will help brands to choose their influencer carefully based on the categories that have more success. Millennials in Swiss Romandie follow mostly influencers in the fashion category (Table 3). Influencers in the fashion category have increased on Instagram over the last several years. From blockbuster celebrities to micro-influencers, they like to post photos of themselves wearing clothes from retailer brands to luxury brands. We could therefore say that people have an interest in seeing how others portray themselves to the public. They follow them to get inspired and to have ideas. It is followed equally by the lifestyle and fitness category. Lifestyle is about showing people the places influencers visit, restaurants they go to eat, their holidays, their home decorations for example. We all look for inspiration, ideas to visit places, to décor our room, to go to places to eat. Social Media influencers seem to give answers to people's demands. The fitness industry has been booming over the last years. The global market size has reached \$87.2 billion, and there are 201'000 clubs worldwide for 174 million members (WellnessCreativeCo, 09.01.2019). This could be due to the fact that people care more and more about their health. According to *Global Young Voices*, Millennials care more about their health than other generations. At least 77% of them care about what they eat and exclude from their diet everything they consider harmful for their health. This category should not be ignored by brands if they want to attract more people and have more visibility. In question 9, people had

the possibility to add their answers and, beauty, makeup, photography, finances and jobs are the categories among their answers.

Figure 8: Number of times respondents check influencers' profiles



The answers of question 12 show how many times respondents check the profiles of the influencers they follow. 47.5% of the respondents check once a day their profiles (Figure 8) and 11.5% more than twice. According to *Digital Information World*, the daily time spent on social media has increased the last 8 years. In 2018, people aged between 24-34 years old spent on average 2 hours 37 minutes per day on social networking and messaging platforms. This shows how social media is part of people's everyday life and how they feel the need to be connected through it to the world. The majority of Swiss Romandie Millennials according to this survey seem to be very active on Social Media. Based on these findings we could say that some of them are dependent or "addicted" to Social Media.

Table 4: Respondents' connection and trust with influencers

Connection						
Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
	5.7%	18%	38.5%	27.9%	9.8%	
Trust						
Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
	3.3%	15.6%	26.2%	32.8%	22.1%	

The purpose of question 13 was to see how much respondents feel connected to the influencers they follow. People feel connected to others when they have similarities or when they can relate to them. There is a kind of attachment that is built between followers and influencers through attractiveness or authenticity. The results show that the majority of the

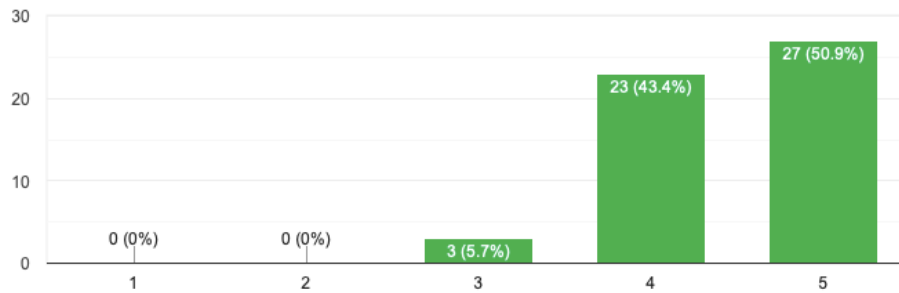
participants, 38.5%, feel moderately attached to the influencers they follow (Table 4). This could be compared with the numbers for trust. People tend to trust those who they are familiar with. Without a connection, there is no trust, so therefore in order to build trust, influencers have to connect and engage with their audience. Here, it is surprising to see that only 9.8% feel strongly connected to them against 22.1% who strongly trust them (Table 4). This analysis shows that while the majority of the influencers might struggle to fully connect with their audience, when it comes to trust, respondents have mixed feelings to fully trusting influencers. We could say that some Millennials seem to easily trust or are less judgmental when it comes to trusting unknown people on a personal level. They seem to be more open minded and less judgmental.

Table 5: Respondents consider buying & bought a product endorsed by influencers

Consider buying a product endorsed by influencers				
	Total %	Female	Male	Total respondents
Yes	60.7%	33.6%	27.1%	74
No	39.3%	20.5%	18.8%	48
Bought a product endorsed by influencers				
	Total %	Female	Male	Total respondents
Yes	43.4%	28.7%	14.7%	53
No	56.6%	27.1%	29.5%	69

Question 15 and 16 of the survey focus on the buying decision of the respondents. They were asked if they would consider buying a product endorsed by an influencer. A large majority of them answered “yes” (Table 5). This answer could be linked to the trust factor that could lead to the influence. Only 39.3% of the respondents said they won’t consider buying a product endorsed by influencers. It is interesting to see that the majority of the people who answered “yes” are female. Question 16 asked the participants if they have ever bought a product endorsed by influencers. Only 43.4% of the respondents answered “yes” with a majority (28.7%) being women. More men responded than they never bought a product endorsed as such. Thus, according to this sample, social media influencers seem to have more influence over women than men in their purchasing decisions. Several questions come out of these findings such as why women are more influenced than men? Is it because most of the respondents of this survey are women that this result came out? Or is it something true in real life? Women are also in majority who bought a product through influencer marketing. We could therefore say that women need the opinion of others in order to buy a product.

Figure 9: Satisfaction after buying a product endorsed by influencers



Respondents who bought a product promoted by influencers were mostly very satisfied. The majority of them, 50.9% were strongly satisfied by it (Figure 9). Thus, it is important to mention that the more people are satisfied, the more they will trust the influencers and the more they will consider buying what they endorse. These people can also post reviews which will push others to consider buying and trust influencers. Influencers should use these opportunities to get more endorsements and brands should use it to attract more customers.

Figure 10: Respondents' interests in luxury items

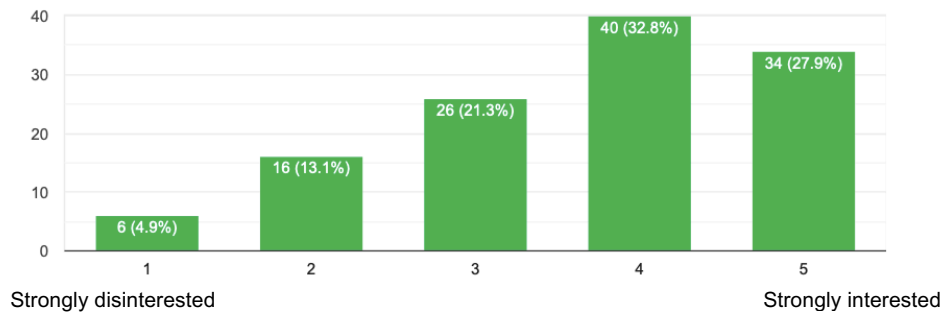
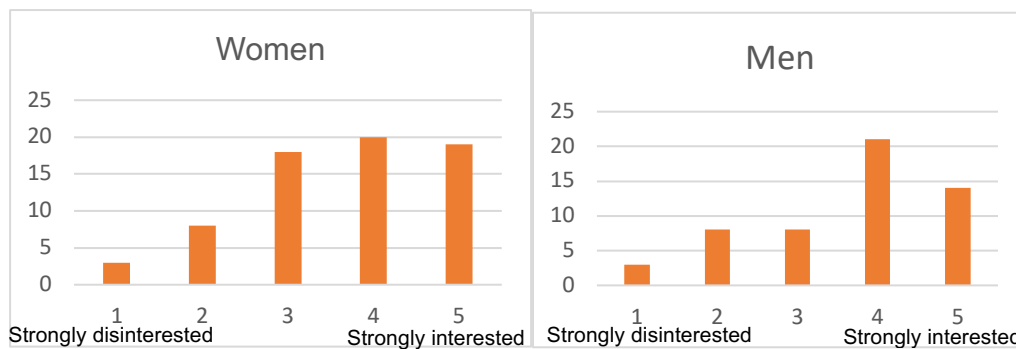


Figure 11: Respondents interest in luxury items by gender



The following question focuses on the respondents' interest in luxury items in general. As this study is on the luxury watch industry, it is important to know if Millennials have any interest in this category of products. The question was made on a Likert Scale from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly disinterested and 5 being strongly interested. The majority of them seems to be very interested with 27.9% of the respondents being strongly interested (Figure 10). Only a little 4.9% of them responded strongly disinterested. It is interesting to notice that the majority of the respondents who are interested are women (Figure 11). Studies however show that men spend more than women, but the number of items purchased are more or less same, an average of 2.8 for women and 2.9 for men (Luxury Daily, 03.04.2017). This suggests that men tend to buy more expensive items than women. This could be due to the fact that men earn more than women and that there is an obvious disparity between both genders. Another fact is that men tend to buy more luxury items for others than themselves with 79% of men buying for themselves against 89% of women (Danny Parisi, Luxury Daily, 03.04.2017). We could therefore say that women have more interest in luxury items, however when it comes to buy them, they seem to be pickier and more hesitant in comparison to men.

Figure 12: Respondents would consider buying luxury items endorsed by influencers

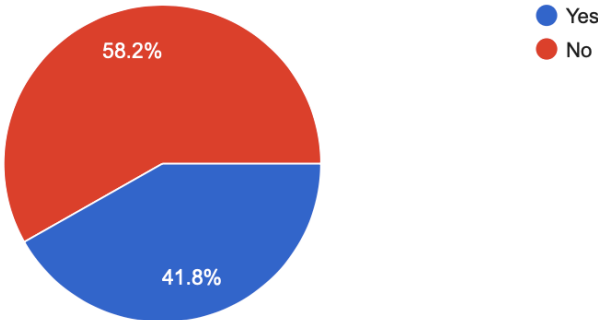
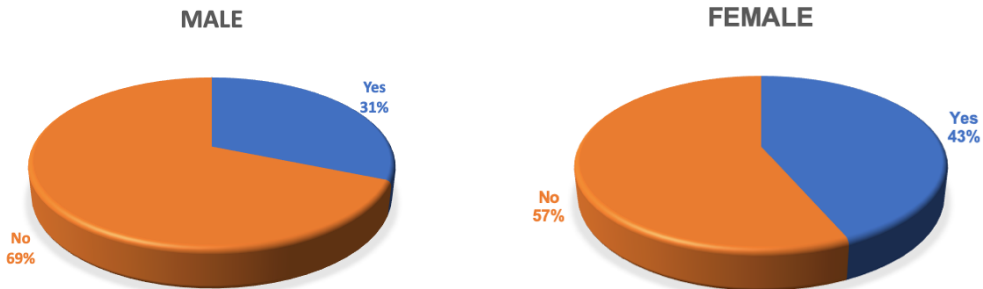


Figure 13: Respondents would consider buying luxury items endorsed by influencers by gender



Among the 122 respondents who follow influencers on social media, only 41.8% of them would consider buying a luxury item promoted by an influencer against 58.2% who wouldn't (Figure 12). This is less than the 60.7% who would consider buying an item other than luxury (Table 5). Many factors could explain this result such as the fact that luxury items are more expensive, and people would generally think before purchasing them. Moreover, women tend to be more influenced by influencers than men who the large majority won't buy a luxury item that is promoted by an influencer (Figure 13).

Figure 14: Reasons why respondents buy luxury items

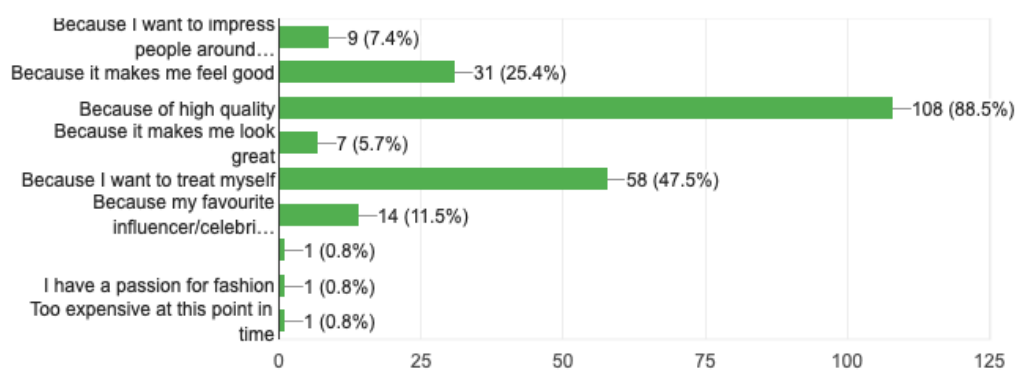
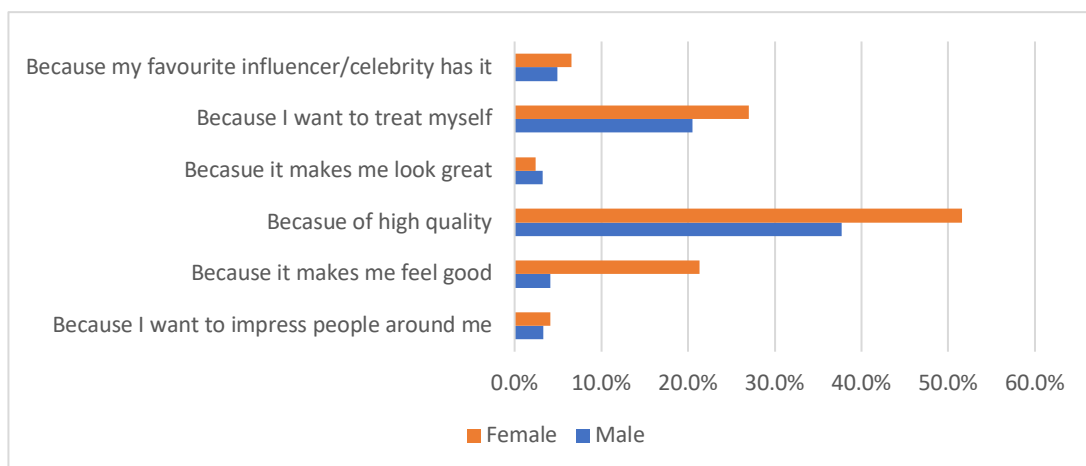


Figure 15: Reasons why respondents buy luxury items by gender



The majority of the Millennials buy luxury items for the quality. While this is something common, it is interesting to see that they also buy luxury items to please themselves not because their favorite influencers or celebrities say what they have to buy or that they have to have it. "I want to treat myself" scored 47.5% among the respondents followed by "Because it makes me feel

good” with 25.4% of respondents answering that (Figure 14). Women seems to buy things to please themselves and because it makes them feel good more than men do (Figure 15). This could be linked to the fact that 79% of men buying for themselves against 89% of women as seen before (Danny Parisi, Luxury Daily, 03.04.2017). Only 11.5% of the respondents buy luxury items because their favorite influencer or celebrity has it. 7.4% out of 122 respondents like to impress people around them with their luxury products (Figure 14).

Figure 16: Respondents own a luxury watch priced over 3'000 CHF

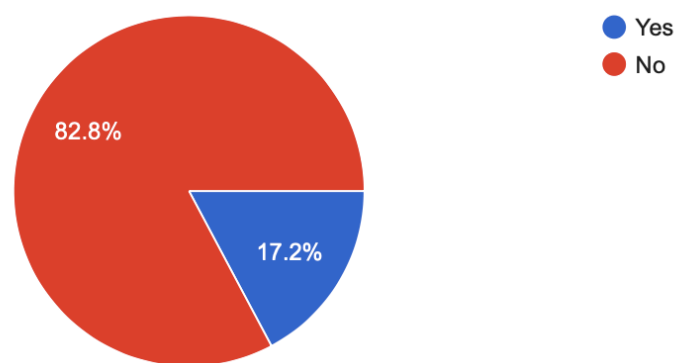
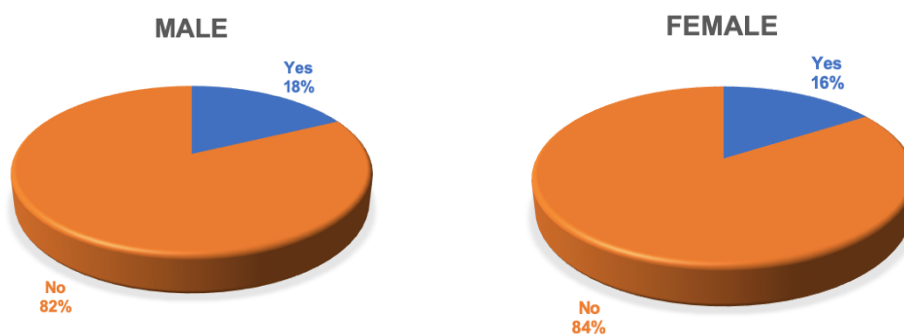


Figure 17: Respondents own a luxury watch priced over 3'000 CHF by gender



As mentioned before, according to the *Federation of the Swiss watch Industry*, a watch is considered truly luxurious when it is priced over 3'000 CHF. The goal of this question was to know if Millennials already own any luxury watches. 17.2% of the respondents own a luxury watch against the majority, 82.8% who don't (Figure 16). It is important to mention while this question specifically mentions a watch over 3000 CHF, some of the respondents could own watches priced between 1000 CHF and 3000 CHF. That amount of money spent on a watch

should be taken into consideration as these could lead the same people in the future to buy more expensive watches. Moreover, while 17.2% of the respondents own a luxury watch, it is not clear if they bought it themselves or if they received it as a gift. There used to be this perception that men buy more watches than women, today women are just as interested as men in watches as “like their male counterparts, they’re also willing to spend upwards of six figures for the privilege” (Fortune, 25.09.2017). The results show that among the respondents, there is a slight difference of 1% when it comes to owning a luxury watch (Figure 17). Until recently, women’s luxury watches were only small watches encrusted with diamonds. Brands have seen that women have real interest in complicated and mechanical timepiece so there is a real opportunity that brands need to grab. Women are more and more independent and have the ability to buy luxury watches as much as men (Stacey Perman, Fortune, 25.09.2017).

Figure 18: Respondents consider buying affordable (2000-5000 CHF) luxury watch promoted by influencers on social media

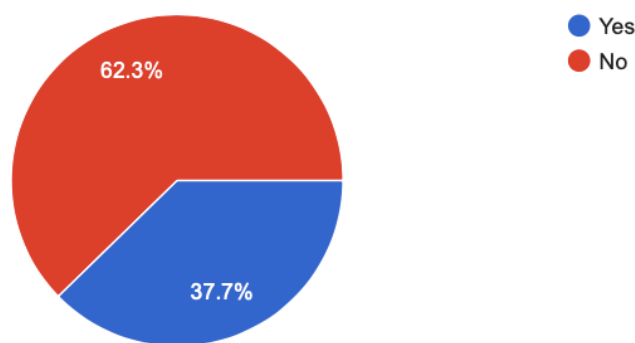
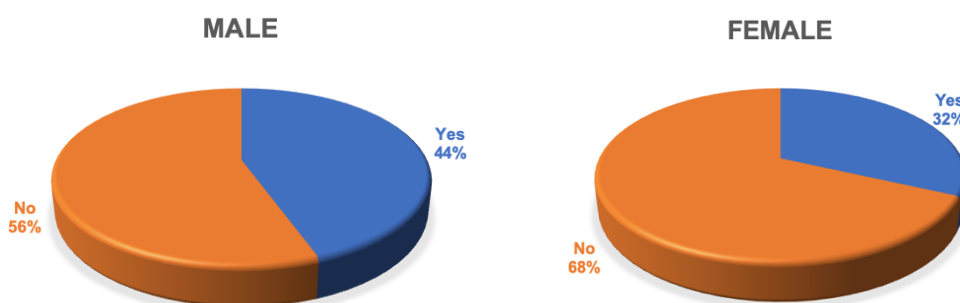


Figure 19: Respondents consider buying affordable (2000-5000 CHF) luxury watch promoted by influencers on social media by gender



Luxury watch brands sell watches at very expensive prices that most of the time it is impossible for common people to buy them. For instance, the most expensive watch is priced at \$55 million by Graff, a British multinational jeweler (Luxhabitat, 10.06.2018). Although they want to remain exclusive and have a niche customer segment, more and more luxury brands are creating affordable lines to attract more people. This could be mostly seen in the fashion industry. Many can remember when Versace collaborated with H&M to create an affordable line of clothing and accessories for men and women. It was followed by Lanvin who also collaborated with H&M. This had created a lot of buzz and gained publicity for both brands. Another possibility is to create diffusion brands which are affordable than the signature brand such as Versace with their diffusion line Versus. These lines allow brands to reach a larger customer segment and increase their revenue.

If not collaboration or diffusion brands, luxury brands should consider having a line of products that are affordable. Over the last years, many fine watches and jewellery brands have created an affordable line of products that appeal to a large majority of people. Cartier, Tiffany & Co are among them. In the survey, Millennials were asked if they would consider buying a line of affordable (2000-5000 CHF) luxury watches that would be promoted by an influencer and 62.3% of them answered “no” while 37.7% answered “yes” (Figure 18). The majority of them who answered “yes” are male and they are also the majority who answered “no” (Figure 19). Could this be because men follow more watch pages than women or that they are willing to take the opportunity to buy a luxury watch?

Figure 20: Respondents’ purchase decisions influence

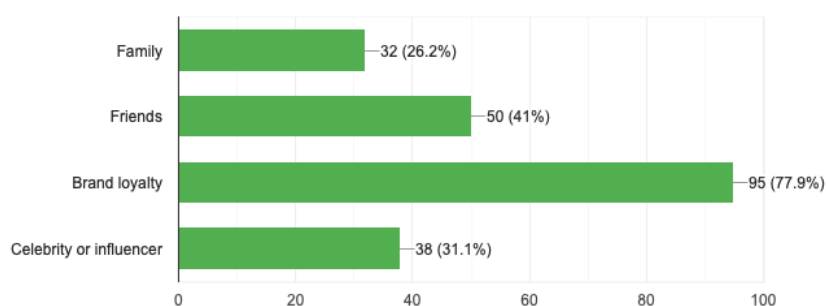
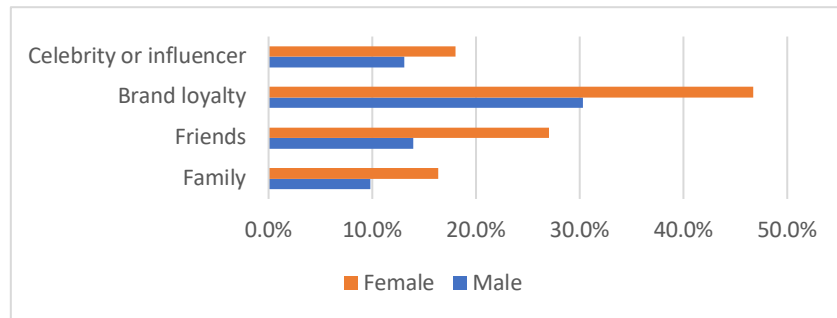


Figure 21: Respondents' purchase decisions influence by gender



Millennials were asked to choose what has a greater influence on their purchase decisions and the majority 77.9% of them chose brand loyalty (Figure 20). Females scored the majority in every criterion (Figure 21). It is followed by friends who seem to have a greater influence on the buying decisions of Millennials, mostly for women. It is interesting to note that women are the ones who are most influenced by others such as family, friends, or influencers (Figure 11b).

Figure 22: Respondents' way of buying products promoted on social media

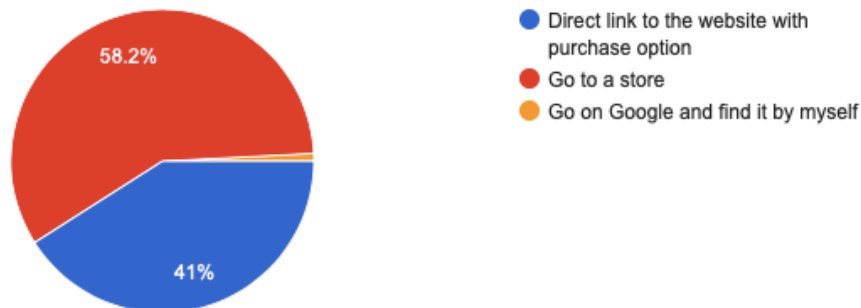


Figure 23: Respondents' way of buying products promoted on social media by gender



The last question of this survey asked Millennials how and where they prefer buying a product that they have seen promoted on social media. The majority, 58.2% of them prefer to go to a store to buy products against 41% who prefers online shopping (Figure 22). Men seem to be more inclined to buy online than in the store than women and almost the same percentage of them buying online and going to store compared to women where the majority prefers going to a store (Figure 23). Could that be because women shop more than men? Other reasons could be that Millennials want to try the product, touch it and see it before buying it. They could be also looking for reviews, or checking multiple channels before deciding to buy in-store. But that doesn't mean that Millennials do not buy online. Recent researches show that compared to 2017, an increase of 9% of Millennials prefer to browse online and purchase online. Therefore, marketers who want to reach Millennials online "should know where and why this generation browses, researches and transacts where they do, and position themselves accordingly" (eMarketer, 12.04.2019).

4.2 Qualitative research analysis

This qualitative research was answered by Millennials living in Swiss Romandie area. Eighteen people aged between 24 and 38 years old participated to the research with their full oral agreement. The purpose of the study was explained to them before starting the interview. This qualitative research was made in order to understand more in depth the relationship between influencers and followers. The questions were answered by eighteen people. Among the 18 participants, 55% of them are men and 45% women. Though the age varies from 24 to 34, the average age of the interviewees is 28 (Appendix 4). There are three students (Interviewee 8, 10 and 14), fourteen people who work and one unemployed person. All the respondents are from Europe, except one person who is from Asia (Interviewee 13). All of the them follow influencers on Instagram mostly except two persons who follow them on YouTube (Interviewee 10 and 13). The mean age for women is 26.25 and the mean age of men is 28.8 years which is more than 2 years higher than women. By looking at this profile, we could say this sample represents the scope of this research and all are on social media and they follow influencers.

Table 6: Category of influencers followed by interviewees

Category of influencers	Number of interviewees	Men	Women
Photography	1	-	1
Travel	1	1	-
Medicine	1	-	1
Comedy	2	2	-
Fitness	4	4	-
Food	4	3	1
Beauty	5	-	5
Sports	5	5	-
Lifestyle	5	1	4
Fashion	6	2	4

The category of influencers which are more followed by the sample is fashion. 6 out of 18 participants follow influencers who promote fashion and 4 out of 6 are women (Table 6). As seen before, Fashion is the category that has more posts on Instagram with 25% of sponsored post followed by food with 12% of posts (InfluencerDB, 21.11.2018). Fashion is also the category chosen by of the respondents in the quantitative research with 63.9% and is also followed by lifestyle (Table 3). Lifestyle, sports and beauty score 5 out of 18 while lifestyle is mostly followed by women (Table 6). Based on the findings, men seem to be more inclined towards sports and fitness as both categories were chosen by only men. As mentioned before, according to *Global Young Voices*, 77% of Millennials care more about their health than other generations. The beauty category is fully chosen by women. Instagram has allowed many makeup artists to know fame from Huda Kattan to Mari Maria. These women have started as makeup artists to finish with having makeup brands of their own. Their followers are they key to the success. Photography, travel and medicine scored each 1 out of 18. Based on these findings we could rightly say that people and mostly women are more inclined to follow influencers in the fashion, lifestyle and beauty category and men are more inclined to follow influencers in sports and fitness categories.

4.2.1 Respondents knowledge and opinion about influencer marketing

Everyone in this research has heard about influencers. They describe an influencer as someone who “tries to influence others” (interviewee 2), “tries to influence you [...], “try to make people buy products” (interviewee 15, Appendix 4) and “will want you to buy” (interviewee 6) things. Influencers are associated with social media for many “posts [...] on social media” (interviewee 2), “show their lifestyle on social media” (interviewee 3). They are described as

having a lot of followers by interviewee 8 or “a celebrity” (interviewee 9). Interviewee 9 believes that influencers can make a change and interviewee 10 see them as someone “would aspire to be”. Some are more reluctant and think influencers think mostly about money “will literally promote any products that pay them” (interviewee 4) than at what they believe.

Influencer marketing is defined as a “direct” endorsing way by interviewee 2”. Respondents believe and know that this is a path to fame for some people “influencers can make a name for themselves” (interviewee 2) and “have their moment of fame” interviewee 8. Some described it as a “job” (interviewee 12). It’s described as a way to target “a large audience” (interviewee 1). However, interviewee 3 expressed some limitations as she feels too much promotion by an influencer will be less interesting “I would get bored”. As for brands, respondents think that it is a “clever way to sell” (interviewee 4), “great way to promote products” (interviewee 6). Interviewee 7 describes it as “pure marketing” and a less costly way for brands to promote their products. Interviewee 9 describes it as “the best way to get [...] products consumed”. Interviewee 9 believes that new generation prefers it. These findings show us that influencer marketing is not unknown, people are very much aware of this trend and use it on daily basis.

4.2.2 Key factors of connection and affinity between influencers and followers in fashion category

This part of the analysis is based on interviews that could be found in **Appendix 5**.

- *Style and attractiveness*

In the fashion category (Appendix 4) followers are mostly driven by style and attractiveness when it comes to follow influencers. For instance, “I like her style”, “she has great style sense” (interviewee 16), “I love her style” (interviewee 11) are mentioned by the respondents as key drivers. The physical appearance of the followers plays an important role as well “each time I see her, I’m mesmerized”, “really attractive” (interviewee 12), “beautiful woman” (interviewee 17).

- *Aesthetic*

The visual and aesthetic of the influencers page and the influencer him/herself seem to be what drive followers to follow them in the fashion category. A good attractive feed is important for any influencers to attract people and to convert them to followers. Interviewee 7 mentioned that he followed an influencer because he finds his feed “cool”. Others were mesmerized by the photos and described them as “amazing” and “dreamy” (interviewee 8) or “gorgeous” or

“visually it’s beautiful” (interviewee 16). The term “wow” (interviewee 8 & 16) and “catchy” (interviewee 16) were mentioned by two respondents to express their feelings when first seeing the influencers.

- *Similarities between influencers and followers*

Having similarities is another factor of attachment between followers and influencers. For instance, interviewee 11 expressed that her favorite influencers could be her friends as one of them “is a good example of values and vision” that she shares. Similarities in taste is also expressed by followers “has a similar style to mine” (interviewee 11) and “we have similar taste” (interviewee 8). Similarities are also shown in their personalities “I can relate to their personality” (interviewee 7). Affinity is an age-related factor as respondent 11 feel that she can relate to an influencer because of their same age “she is younger [...] so I can identify myself more to her”.

- *Inspiration and admiration*

Inspiration and admiration are one of the reasons why this sample follows influencers and are connected to them. Respondent 16 evoked “she’s very inspirational” or “I get inspired” as a key driver that will make her keep following the influencer in the future. Respondent 8 finds them to be “interesting and inspiring” and respondent 7 get ideas from them “give me idea” as well as respondent 17 “they give me ideas”. Admiration is also very clearly evoked many times by respondent 17 “so many people look up to her and I am one of them” or “I think he gives hope and strength” and “I admire them”. Respondents are also amazed by influencers’ journey to fame and their achievements “how far she has come [...] is pretty amazing” (interviewee 8), “remarkable”, “he is a legend” (interviewee 12) and “I admire her for her achievements” (interviewee 8). Respondent 11 admires influencer’s morals and values “Chiara is a person who has her morals and values and I admire that”.

- *Interest in influencers’ life*

With the evolution of social media, it has become easy for celebrities to show their life to their followers, admirers and fans. It has also helped some people to make a name for themselves and gain that celebrity notoriety. People have a lot of interest in the lives of these people. They want to know their every move. Respondents seem to have a real interest to know what their favorite influencers or celebrities do in their everyday life “I like seeing [...] what they do in life” (interviewee 16), “I want to know what she does in her life” (interviewee 8) and “she is sharing a lot of her life” (interviewee 11).

- *Influencers' personality and character*

In order to connect with people, it is important for to build a relationship with their followers. Personality plays a big role in that case. Followers are attracted to influencers who have a fun personality “they seem to be funny” (interviewee 7), “fun person” (interviewee 16). Being genuine and being honest with people help to build relationships (Forbes, 28.12.2018). Being “natural and spontaneous” (interviewee 11), being “genuine” (interviewee 8) and being “a kind soul” are the elements that are liked by the followers. Others are more impressed by the motivation and dedication of influencers “very dedicated” and “hard-working” (interviewee 16). The friendly personality of influencers is also mentioned by followers “very friendly”, and “sweet person” (interviewee 16). Others are impressed by the influencers who are out of the conventional such as respondent 17 who follows an influencer because he is “unconventional” and “breaks stereotypes”.

4.2.3 Key factors of connection and affinity between influencers and followers in other categories

The key factors mentioned above could also be found in the answers of the other interviewee's in other categories (Appendix 5). For instance, respondent 10, in the food and travel categories mentioned that there is a sort of connection between him and the influencers “I do feel connected with them” because they influence him “they have some sort of influence in my life”. Inspiration is also expressed by the respondents in the food category “gives me ideas to eat healthy” (interviewee 2) and “he gives me idea” (interviewee 1) and in beauty category “gives advice” (interviewee 14). For interviewee 14, they are a source of inspiration and motivation “He kind of inspires me a lot and motivates me to study harder”. The personality of the influencers is also evoked as a reason of connection “lively person”, “nice people”, “genuine”, “personality that attracts people to her”, “down-to-earth”, and “good guy” in the fitness, beauty and medicine categories (interviewees 1, 6 & 14). Some people follow the influencers because they are entertaining “funny person”, “funny guy”, “he's also really entertaining” (interviewee 3, 13 & 14). Some also feel that there is a sort of affinity between them and the influencers “I feel like I can laugh with him and with my friends” (interviewee 2), and “I can relate” (interviewee 6). Attractiveness is also expressed as key driver of connection “good looking” (interviewee 14) and “beautiful women” (interviewee 6).

This qualitative research shows that respondents are attached and admire these influencers because some of them fight for different causes such as health “I like the fact that he uses his platform for many causes related to health and medicine” (interviewee 14) or are caring about

people “someone very concerned about people” (interviewee 1) and “make the world a better place” (interviewee 9). Interviewees 4 and 15 also like the fact that these influencers are very “family-oriented” people. Like the fashion category, there is a sort of admiration that these followers feel for the influencers for their achievements “self-made amazing women”, “they are here today because of their hard work and I admire them for that.” (interviewee 6) and “impressed”. The content provided by influencers is important to some respondents. In order, to attract people, it is important to provide good content which speaks to the target audience. Respondents evoked content as a key to attachment and connectivity with influencers “they provide good content” and “full of information and knowledge” (interviewees 1 & 13). Finally, it could be seen that some respondents idolize “he is my favorite”, “he’s the best” (interviewee 15), “idol” (interviewee 4) and “copy his haircut” (interviewee 9). They also worship them “a legend”, “role model” and “one of a kind” (interviewees 12 & 9).

4.2.4 Interaction between followers and influencers

The interaction between followers and influencers is mostly one-way. The majority of the respondents (Appendix 5) mostly like the posts and rarely comment “I like their posts almost every time but never comment” (interviewee 11). They only comment when they want to show the posts to somebody “I have rarely commented unless I tagged a friend to show her something” (interviewee 6). Or, when there is an attempt to interact, it seems to be only one way “I asked her a question, but I didn’t get any reply” (interviewee 14). Therefore, we could assume that Millennials seem to be shy and prefer to be silent followers.

4.2.5 Trust based relationship

Every relationship is built on trust. It is important for influencers to build trust with their followers. Building trust with followers could lead them to purchase. Out of the 18 interviewees, 10 of them trust the influencers they follow (Appendix 5). This represents at least 55.5% of the sample and could be compared to the respondents of the survey. In fact, 22.1% of respondents in the survey strongly trust influencers and 32.8% trust them enough (Table 4). We could therefore say that the results are quite similar.

- *Why followers trust influencers*

Interviewee 3 and 4 mentioned honesty in their communication as a factor of trustworthiness “I do trust them [...] honest in their way to communicate” and “he delivered promises and that

worked for me, so I trust him”. Others evoked their previous purchase experience as a key element to trust influencers “I have used the products he promotes before and they were good” (interviewee 4) and “I also tried a few things he suggested” (interviewee 18). Trustworthiness seem also to be something linked with the number of followers and fame “. Even with such fame and wealth [...] my trust with it” (interviewee 9), “both of them have over a million subscribers around the globe” (interviewee 10) and “they both have a huge fan base” (interviewee 12). Even though most of the respondents answered that they trust influencers, there are some who are vigilant “I don’t trust him blindly” (interviewee 18). Respondent 1 mentioned he “partially” trusts the influencer just because a friend knows him. Respondent 2 will do research elsewhere before deciding something “even if I trust them, I’ll always look somewhere else to be sure”.

- *Why followers don’t trust influencers*

At least 44.5% of the respondents of this qualitative research answered that they do not trust influencers very partially trust them (Appendix 5). One of the reasons mentioned is that respondents do not trust people they do not personally know “I don’t really know him” (interviewee 1), “I don’t think you can fully trust someone you don’t know” (interviewee 13) and “mostly not people I don’t personally know” (interviewee 17). Another reason is that respondents believe that influencers are not real, and they are projecting an image “I don’t know if they are genuine” (interviewee 7), “It’s just an image” and “. I don’t think that’s the real them” (interviewee 13). Finally, respondents mentioned business as an element that is a barrier to trustworthiness “they are doing business, and this is pure marketing” (interviewee 5) and “they are doing business”.

4.2.6 Respondents’ interest in luxury items

Respondents were asked if they would consider buying a luxury product promoted by influencers (Appendix 5, Q15). Among them, some are interested in luxury products but cannot afford to buy them, while others are not interested at all. Interviewee 1 evoked that he needs to be first interested in luxury items in order to consider buying them, same as interviewee 13 who is not interested in luxury products. Interviewee 3 does not consider herself to be a “luxurious” person but is open to “any kind of offer” just like interviewee 5 “if I have a special offer [...] I might consider buying it” and interviewee 12 “good deal”. Price is a big factor that is mentioned by respondents “I probably wouldn’t because of the price” (interviewee 4), “more than 1000 CHF, I don’t think I’ll buy it” (interviewee 6), “too expensive”, “I don’t have the ability” (interviewee 7), “I can’t afford luxury” (interviewee 8), “don’t have the money” (interviewee 10),

“I don’t have the ability” (interviewee 14), and “I don’t have that money” (interviewee 15). Among the respondents who mentioned price as a barrier, three of them are students (interviewees 8,10 & 14). This shows that even though some have real interest in luxury items, they cannot afford it at this moment in their lives.

4.2.7 Purchase behavior

Out of 18 respondents, 11 have bought something through influencer marketing or got inspired by influencers (Appendix 4). This is approximately 61% of the sample and more than the 43.4% of the respondents of the survey (Table 5). Interviewee 1 has bought twice fitness products, protein that were endorsed by an influencer (Appendix 5). Interviewee 4 who has many times bought shoes and t-shirts promoted by his favorite influencer and that he “would buy anything he would promote”. Sports clothes were also bought by interviewee 15 “I did buy shoes and a vest”. This shows that there is a strong attachment between this respondent and the influencer which led to purchase. Interviewee 9 mentioned to have bought twice products endorsed by both products were from the influencer’s own brand. Makeup is another product that is mostly bought by the interviewees “I bought [...] and makeup” (interviewee 3) and “mostly makeup” (interviewee 6 & 17). Respondents are more inclined to buy beauty products and clothes endorsed by influencers in this sample. Only one respondent bought an expensive bag “to reward” herself for finding a new job (interviewee 6).

Respondents who have never bought something promoted by influencers mention different reasons to their decision. For instance, interviewee 2 said that he’s someone who looks for buying on social media “I’m not someone who look out genuinely to buy something on social media”. Trust issues are also mentioned by one of the respondents who “don’t trust online sales” and that she’s vigilant “I won’t jump just because someone promotes it and it looks good”. Respondents could have similarities and could feel connected to influencers, but this won’t lead to purchase “I won’t buy it only because they are promoting it” (interviewee 11). Even though interviewee purchased twice from influencer marketing, he believes that products are “misleading” because they’re “low quality products”. Finally, respondents also answered that influencers are a source of inspiration for them “I do get inspired” (interviewee 15), “I get inspired” (interviewee 16) but this does not say if there is a purchase later on.

In conclusion, based on this analysis it can be said that even though there is a kind of attachment between followers and influencers, this does not always lead to purchase behavior. Purchase mainly happened in the sports, fitness and beauty category. Influencers are a source of inspiration for some, while others are more vigilant and judgmental.

4.3 Conversation with Piaget

As mentioned before, the purpose of this interview with Piaget was to understand how luxury watch brands work with influencers and if they already use this type of marketing to promote their products. It was also to better understand how they see influencer marketing and its place in the luxury watch industry compared to traditional marketing. Mrs. Susanne GELORMINI, interviewee 1, (Social Media & Content PM) & Mr. Sharannath Mohanram, interviewee 2, (Digital Media Lead) at Piaget SA are the person interviewed.

The first interviewee (Q1, Appendix 1) describes influencer as someone “that has kind of influence or impact commercially on the market or sector” who can’t always be associated with “conversion” but believes they have an impact on “awareness” and “traditional PR”. The second interviewee describes an influencer as not only a person, but according to him (Q1, Appendix 2), it could be a “publisher or editorials”. Digital marketing is part of every companies marketing strategy. With the evolution of technology and the way people consume, there is no way brands can get away from it. According to interviewee 2 (Q2, Appendix 2), Switzerland is more traditional compared to countries such as China and the United Kingdom who are more digital. He believes that the traditional mass media is becoming digital “rapidly”. However, there are some traditional channels who will stay there. Interviewee 1 believes also that traditional marketing will “never completely” disappear and that companies need to find the right media to endorse their products (Q2, Appendix 2).

When it comes to target audience on social media, Piaget mostly target young people, “Millennials” (interviewee 2, Q3, Appendix 2). With influencers marketing, their main target are women aged between 18-44 as they are the most active for them (interviewee 1, Q4, Appendix 1). However, influencers are mostly used “to spread awareness” to Millennials but it is not their primary market and “it will not have an immediate impact on sales” (interviewee 1, Q5, Appendix 1). When it comes to the platform which is best suited to target Generation Y, “social media” and “digital publications” are the ones to be considered. Many KPI’s are taken into account when it comes to choosing the right influencer such as “reach”, “aesthetic”, the difference between “followers and “true” followers” (interviewee1, Q8, Appendix 1). The geographic situation should also be considered as it will help brands to “find niche influencers to grow locally”.

While 45% of luxury brands consider micro-influencers to be more effective than celebrities with millions of followers (Launch Metrics, The State of Influencer Marketing), a celebrity with

a lot of followers is better suited for “awareness” and the “launching of a product” (interviewee 1, Q4, Appendix 2). However, for conversion (sales), a micro-influencer or “niche influencer” with a lower number of followers should be considered as “they have more of a quality reach” (interviewee 1, Q4, Appendix 2) than blockbuster celebrities who mostly “cover various territory” and who are considered as “effective for brand image” (interviewee 1, Q9, Appendix 2). Piaget however, at the moment focuses on blockbuster celebrities to endorse their products rather than micro-influencers. (interviewee 1, Q9, Appendix 2). Influencer marketing should not be considered as a “substitute for traditional marketing”, but it is something that should not be ignored and should be “considered as top” (interviewee 1, Q6, Appendix 2). “The impact is much more” with traditional marketing such as TV. (interviewee 2, Q6, Appendix 2). It is therefore important to rightfully and carefully “choose why you’re using it” (interviewee 2, Q6, Appendix 2).

According to the interviewees there is no best platform influencer marketing. Influencers could be found in different “channels depending on where they are” (interviewee 1, Q7, Appendix 2). An example given is China where WeChat is dominating the social media platforms with 1.06 billion active users in August 2018 (Linkinfluence). Therefore, if a Chinese influencer is chosen to promote the luxury brand, he/she will be mostly present on WeChat and “if we are lucky, also on Instagram” (interviewee 1, Q7, Appendix 2). They should also be chosen according to the target audience as it is important to first “choose the audience” and then based on that “choose the influencer” (interviewee 2, Q7, Appendix 2). Influencer marketing should “be a relationship based” marketing tool. Influencers work on their content to have followers or worshippers, who follow them in their journey. However, even though people follow them and like to know what celebrities do in their life, studies show that 52% of Millennials trust less influencers than before (Going Big, (29.08.2019). Trust issues seems to be a concern as well among luxury brands as customers are more reluctant. Sometimes it could be difficult for consumers to know if the posts by influencers are “organic” or if “a brand is paying them” (interviewee 2, Q10, Appendix 2). However, influencers marketing seems to have a future. For that, brands should focus on building “natural relationships” in order to be credible with the public (interviewee 1, Q10, Appendix 1).

This conversation with Piaget shows us that luxury brands use influencer marketing as a marketing strategy to attract new customers. However, it shows that when it comes to choose an influencer to promote a product, luxury brands tend to focus more on blockbuster celebrities rather than micro-influencers, who could help them convert visitors into customers. Is it because they want to maintain their exclusive image? Luxury brands seem to be prefer staying on the safe side by working with celebrities rather than taking the risk with micro-influencers.

5 Discussion & recommendations

A basis combining the findings, my analysis and the literature review, it can be seen Millennials are aware of the growing trend on influencer marketing and that the large majority of them understand the term influencer and follow at least one influencer on social media. The picture-based platform came out as the most favorite social media platform for Millennials in the quantitative and qualitative analysis to follow influencers even though Facebook is the platform where Millennials are mostly present. Instagram is also influencers favorite platform as 78% of them could be found on this particular platform (Statista).

Focus in influencers in different categories

According to the data collected, *fashion and lifestyle* is the category that is followed the most by respondents. As a matter of fact, fashion is the category that has the most sponsored posts (25%) on Instagram (InfluencerDB, 21.11.2018). Women are mostly inclined to follow influencers in the beauty category while men are mostly inclined to follow influencers in the sports and fitness categories. 77% of Millennials care about their health according to *Global Young Voices*, therefore marketers should take this data into consideration to attract new customers.

Choose influencers who easily connect with their followers

My Findings also show that most of the Millennials check what influencers do quite often. However, the relationship between them and influencers is one-way. Even though they look at their posts on a daily basis, like or comment on them, this does not lead to any interaction between them. This can mostly be regarded as being a fan. Research also shows that most of the Millennials shy away from commenting and prefer to be silent followers. Companies could ask influencers to conduct a live Q&A (question and answer) session with their followers in order to interact with them. It is a great way for influencers to educate their followers about different products they endorse and to know more about their preferences (Neil Patel, 2017).

Key factors of attachment to be considered while choosing an influencer

Several key factors of attachment and affinity with followers and influencer was analyzed and should be considered by brands to select influencers in order to promote their products. While only 9.8% of the respondents in the survey responded to be strongly connected to influencers the majority responded to be moderately connected. The qualitative research gives more in-depth details to this.

- In fact, connection and attachment are shown through influencers **style and physical appearance** in the fashion category (category most followed and with most sponsored posts on Instagram). Taste in style and physical appearance varies from one person to another. A way for companies to reach most of their target customer is to choose an influencer having a huge number of followers who can pull off different styles because of their physical appearance and this would most likely appeal to a larger audience.
- **Aesthetic** is another factor what followers look for. A beautiful feed is also what makes followers keep following influencers “visually it’s beautiful”, “catchy”, “gorgeous” and “woo” (interviewee 16 & 8, Appendix 5). It is also a way for influencers to attract visitors and convert them to followers. Companies should therefore work with influencers who take time to build a beautiful feed by following a theme and being consistent, by following a color scheme for example.
- **Similarities** is another key driver of attachment as people tend to relate more with people who share similarities with them. Psychology shows that people are attracted to those who share similarities with them. In fact, “the greater the degree of attitudinal similarity, the greater the attraction and liking” (Donn Byrne, 06.1965). *Byrne* affirmed that sharing ideas and beliefs reinforces that relationship which could be supported by one of the respondents who said that she follows an influencer because she “is a good example of values and vision” that she shares (interviewee 11). Other similarities could be the age, ethnic backgrounds, or having similar taste in style. As a result, it can be said that sharing similarities with influencers, attract followers and this could potentially lead to purchasing.
- **Inspiration and admiration** are another factor that drives Millennials to following influencers. Millennials in this research seem to look for inspiration and admiration when following an influencer “so many people look up to her and I am one of them” (interviewee 17). A suggestion that could be made from this, is that companies should select influencers who are admired for their achievements and who could influence Millennials in their purchase decision.
- The interest in others’ lives is a common practice by people. People spend a lot of time following celebrities in their life journey that they become “related” to them and feel attached to them. Millennials are among those who wants to know everything about their favourite influencers. **Interest in influencer’s life** is among the key drivers of connection between followers and influencer that came out of this research. Brands should choose influencers who shares a part of their lives with their followers and not only sponsored posts about products or services. This will keep the followers interested and show influencers more as human than a simple marketing tool.

- ***Influencers' personality and character*** is another key element that attracts people to follow them. Some are impressed by their “natural and spontaneous” side (interviewee 11, Appendix 5) and others by “unconventional” influencers. Having a good personality is what makes a person interesting and distinguish him/herself from others (Matt Okeefe, 2019). Working with influencers who have distinguish personality traits could help brands to have more visibility.
- ***Humor and entertainment*** are also part of the key factors of connection and affinity that are expressed by respondents. Millennials are attracted to people who are funny and make them laugh.
- ***Social and philanthropic work*** is one of the reasons why followers are driven to follow influencers. It is also chosen by 5.7% of the respondents in the quantitative research. Millennials are impressed and touched by influencers who use their platforms for good causes and to convey a message. Thus, working with influencers who do charity or work with NGOs could benefit brands to have a better image, attract customers and potentially help save the planet as well as the underprivileged.
- Finally, ***good content*** is also mentioned by respondents’ “they provide good content” (interviewee 1, Appendix 5) which is a key element of attachment and connectivity.

These are some of the key drivers of connection and attachment to influencers besides KPIs such as the difference between followers and “true” followers, or the geographic situation mentioned in the interview by Piaget. These factors should be considered by brands while choosing the right influencer for their target customers. Correctly used, these could lead to a perfect partnership between brands-influencers, influencers-followers and followers-brands.

Avoid trust issues between influencers-followers

Findings show that even though the majority of respondent’s trust influencers, there are still some trust issues between followers and influencers as respondents have mixed feelings. The majority of the respondents in the survey trust or strongly trust the influencers they follow (Table 4) while in the qualitative research the majority trust them. Trustworthiness is shown through honesty, influencers’ way of communicating with followers and after purchase satisfaction. In the survey analysis, 50.9% of the respondents were strongly satisfied by purchasing through influencer marketing. Brands should therefore consider working with influencers who have managed to build real relationship with their followers which could help to build trust. A recommendation would be to work with micro-influencers who have niche followers with whom they managed to build a strong relationship over their journey.

Opt for micro-influencers for conversion and macro-influencers for awareness

After trust, comes the purchasing behavior. Research shows that even though there is a kind of attachment between followers and influencers, this does not always lead to purchase behavior. Purchasing mainly happened in the sports, fitness and beauty category. Influencers are a source of inspiration for some Millennials while others are more vigilant, reluctant and critical. However, studies show that Investing in influencer marketing generates brand awareness and boosts sales by 67% according to 90% of the 600 professionals surveyed over Europe and USA in 2018 by a study done by *Launch Metrics* (LM). Based on the findings, companies should invest in micro-influencers for conversion and blockbuster influencers for visibility and awareness as they are “effective for brand image” (interviewee 1, Q9, Appendix 2)”.

Affordable luxury line or diffusion line to avoid price barrier for some Millennials

Millennials show real interest in luxury items. Among the survey’s respondents, 17.2% of them possessed a luxury watch priced over 3’000 CHF. Findings show that women are more interested in luxury items than men. However, men spend more than women (Luxury Daily, 03.04.2017). Most of the Millennials buy luxury items for quality and to treat themselves. Buying luxury items through influencer marketing is only accepted by 41.8% of the survey respondents against 58.2 who answered no. This gap could be due the fact that most of them cannot afford such expensive products. Price is a big issue for Millennials who are students or who do not earn enough money. In order to reach those who mentioned “price” as a barrier, luxury brands could introduce an affordable range on their line of or they can collaborate with other brands just as “Versace and H&M” did or by simply creating diffusion lines.

It is therefore safe to say that influencer marketing has a bright future with Millennials and that companies should invest more on this strategy. Millennials of today are tech-savvy and thrive on connectivity. Most of them follow influencers for inspiration and ideas. Some of them share similarities with them and can relate to them in terms of personalities or taste. Hence, even though influencer marketing is perceived by some as a pure marketing strategy in the qualitative research, other studies and researches show that it is a great tool to help brands to boost their awareness, visibility and increase adaptation when rightly used. It could be however said that connection and attachment to influencers do not always lead followers to purchase. There is a fine line between bridging this gap, and it can be deduced that over time luxury brands would realize that a huge potential market is still untapped as some Millennials are unable to afford the product even when they follow the influencer on social media.

6 Conclusion

Based on my diverse analysis and findings, it can be depicted that they accurately answered the hypothesis “What impacts do Social Media Influencers (SMI) have on the buying choices of Generation Y, especially on digital platforms such as Instagram used by the luxury watch industry?”. The goal of this project was to discuss how Social Media Influencers affect the buying behavior of Generation Y consumers in the luxury watch industry, especially on Instagram, and luxury watch brands should use this quite proactively, which is new trend to promote their products.

First of all, the research shows that there is a shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. Marketers are expected to spend more in digital marketing than traditional marketing in 2019 and the years to come. Development of technology and innovation has allowed social media to create new marketing opportunities for companies. Millennials being the largest spending generation in history, are aware of the growing trend of influencer marketing.

Influencer marketing when used correctly helps to boost awareness and visibility. It is best to use it when launching a product. Influencers in different categories have different purposes. Micro-influencers should be considered by brands if their goal is conversion (sales) while blockbuster celebrities should be considered for awareness and luxury. Instagram is the best platform to implement influencer marketing strategies as most of the Swiss Romandie Instagram users are Millennials.

The influencers' categories that stand out of this research are fashion, lifestyle, fitness, sports and beauty. Fashion took the first place in both quantitative and qualitative research. Millennials show more interest to influencers in these categories and most of the sponsored posts on Instagram are fashion related. This is a huge boost for the fashion industry as a whole.

Moreover, several key factors that push Millennials to follow influencers and that connect them with each other came out of this research. For instance, aesthetic of influencers' feed, having a great style and the physical appearance or sharing similarities are among the factors mentioned by Millennials. They also give attention to content wise posts and influencers' personalities and character. These elements are fundamental in building trust.

Besides, research show that Millennials have differing opinions about trusting influencers. Some find influencers to be not real and projecting an image. Others know that influencers are

here for business. However, Millennials being the most educated generation in the history know how to not be “mislead” by influencers. Even though there are some trust issues, the research showed that the influencers influence their purchase behavior. For instance, 61% of the qualitative analysis have bought something through influencer marketing or got inspired by influencers against 43.4% of the survey’s respondents. However, it is still difficult for brands to assess how much of their sales are generated by influencer marketing as 58.2% of the Millennials prefers shopping in-store rather than online.

Furthermore, Swiss Romandie Millennials have a real interest in luxury items. 17.2% of them already possessed a luxury watch priced over 3’000 CHF. Their interest in luxury is mostly due to the high quality of products offered and personal reasons such as treating themselves. The majority of Millennials also mentioned that they prefer not to go through influencer marketing to buy luxury products. However, among the interested, there are some who noted “price” as a barrier to buy luxury items. Therefore, there is a high possibility that these people would buy luxury items if they only they can afford them in the future.

In conclusion, this study confirms that influencer marketing is a great marketing strategy tool that has a positive future. In saying that, it can be noted that there are still few limitations and risks involved, mainly being the price and as a result luxury watch brands should consider this strategy to attract Millennials who are regular followers of influencers. The affinity and connection that millennials have with them lead them most of the times to be influenced in their purchase decisions. Choosing the right type of influencers for the right target audience will help luxury watch brands to boost their awareness and prominence and eventually increase their overall sales. However, a deeper qualitative and quantitative research should be conducted to validate these different findings and hypotheses.

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Appendix 1: Conversation with Piaget SA (1)

Questionnaire answered by Susanne GELORMINI (Interviewee 1), Social Media & Content PM at Piaget SA

Q.1 How would you describe the term “influencer”?

For me an influencer is someone (or some “digital” one) that has some kind of influence or impact commercially on the market or sector. While they should not always be directly associated with conversion, they almost always have an impact on awareness and traditional PR.

Q2. According to Mediakix, influencer marketing is expected to grow (5-10\$ billion) by 2020 and it is because 92% of the people trust the recommendations made by people, they follow on social media. What is your opinion about “influencer marketing”?

I think this number is fairly swayed, people are getting smarter and are realizing that influencers are paid for their work, thus slightly diluting their opinions. Influencer marketing however is a great way to spread awareness.

Q3. Do you think a luxurious brand such as Piaget can turn to this type of promotion? Or do you use this channel already?

Yes, we currently activate influencer marketing.

Q4. If you already use this channel, then who are you target customer? Which generation and why?

We use influencers to target mainly women in a various age range, from 18-44. For our communities these women are the most active with Piaget.

Q5. What are your plans for “Millennials”? How would you target this generation (Millennials)?

Millennials are not our primary market. We use influencers to spread awareness to them but are aware that it will not have an immediate impact on sales. We do a lot of paid social media campaigns and work with influencers.

Q6. Which platform do you think is best suited for Piaget to target Millennials and why?

It depends on which market we are focusing on, but we believe in social media and digital publications.

Q7. Olivia Palermo joined the Piaget family as a brand ambassador for the collection “Possession. Why did you choose her to represent your brand?”

She was chosen because of her positioning with other luxury brands, her exposure in the fashion and luxury market, and her following in our target markets.

Q8. Which of the following factors is important to you when selecting influencers? (What are the criteria for choosing an influencer?) Is the number of followers important to you? (Micro (10-100k), macro (101-500k), mega (501k-1.5mil), or celebrities (1.5mil +)? Rate of engagement? Content quality? Etc.

We evaluate several KPIs both qualitatively and quantitatively. It also depends on the objective of the activation. However, the main KPIs we look at are: followers & “true” followers, reach, involvement in various industries, associations with various “circles” (i.e. do they have links with publishers? Art world? Photographer?), overall aesthetic.

Q9. According to Jeffrey Romano (Digital PR & Social Media Manager of Santoni), “Micro-influencers help to engage the target audience and drive more conversions because they can connect with a faithful audience.” Do you agree with him? Would Piaget consider working with micro-influencers?

Piaget does consider working with micro influencers. We, too, believe that micro-influencers could have better ROI vs the typical block buster influencer that is better for awareness.

Q10. Where do you think influencer marketing will be in 10 years from now? Where do you see Piaget with this strategy?

Influencer marketing will only evolve and isn’t going away any time soon. I believe more and more brands will focus on building “natural” relationships to build credibility with the public. This is something Piaget is already activating.

Appendix 2: Conversation with Piaget SA (2)

Interview: on Skype

Date: 17.04.2019

Time: 15:00

Participants: Susanne GELORMINI (Interviewee 1), Social Media & Content PM and Sharannath Mohanram (Interviewee 2), Digital Media Lead at Piaget SA

Q1: *How would you describe the term « influencer marketing »?*

Interviewee 2: An influencer is not someone who's just a person. It could be a publisher, editorials who have enough influence on their followers.

Q2: *Do you think that digital marketing will take over traditional marketing in the very near future?*

Interviewee 2: Piaget is digital. Countries like UK and China are more digital than Switzerland which is more traditional. Traditional mass media is becoming digital rapidly. For me, for example TV, will become just another channel. So yes, digitalization continues, how you buy media will change, it will become digital but there are certain touch points which will still remain as key.

Farzana: *What about you Susanne, do you agree with him?*

Interviewee 1: Yes, I do. I think traditional marketing will never completely go away because you still reach different kinds of people that are present on those kinds of channels. You need just find the right media mix for your company. So, I agree with Sharan with that and I also agree with the fact that these kinds of traditional media, like Tv or newspapers are always evolving. They are trying to compete with digital marketing now, so it's an exciting time for media, that's for sure.

Q3: *Who are your target customers on Social Media?*

Interviewee 2: Compared to the other brands in the Richemont group or in the watch sector, we target young... let's say our main target are Millennials.

Q4: *Piaget has established brand ambassadors such as actors, sportsmen. Do you think Piaget will consider in the future to have micro-influencers (10k-100k followers) to promote its products?*

Interviewee 2: We are actually working on those kinds of ways but it's not exclusive because we like to keep it more subtle. We don't like to have explicit influencers because as I said

before, influencer for us is not just a person. Sometimes, we work with editorial, publishers who then have, let's say, some specific fashion editor who is actually an influencer and contribute for us in a different way. That's for us and influencer or a micro-influencing strategy.

Farzana: *Studies say that 45% of luxury brands, consider micro-influencers to be more effective than other celebrities with millions of followers, what is your opinion about that?*

Interviewee 1: Well also, I think it depends on the objective of your activation. If you want to have a lot of awareness and you're launching a product and nobody knows about you, maybe it would be better to work with some actor or celebrity or someone with huge influence on social media. They will help you improve your awareness, but if your end goal is to improve conversion, it might be more effective to work with a niche influencer with lower followers because their followers really believe in what they're saying and they have more of a quality reach for example.

Q5: *What are the criteria of choosing an influencer? Susanne already answered the question; do you agree with her Sharan?*

Interviewee 2: Yes, I completely agree with her. What she said, is exactly... it's for us based on the activation we do. So, we work across every type of influencers so from the biggest ones to the micro-ones.

Q6: *Do you think influencers give more visibility to brands than traditional marketing such as Tv advertisements or banners?*

Interviewee 1: I think they are definitely not a substitute for traditional marketing. They are something to be considered on top of your media mix. Especially for a brand like Piaget, you can't just rely on influencers to launch a product or get our message out there. It's important to have a complete media mix that matches your objectives.

Interviewee 2: Yes, I agree, the reach and the impact, I don't know if I take for example TV, there is a reason why it's called mass media. It is used by the majority of people, so yes, the impact is much more than what you see on a Facebook ad because people have the freedom to skip your ad you know... to scroll down and skip it. So, the impact, let's say is not the same when you compare it with traditional mass media. So, as Susanne said, you have to choose why you're using it. So, this is always on top of let's say what we are trying to do in addition to our already existing practices.

Q7: *According to you, which Social Media platform is best suited for influencer marketing?*

Interviewee 1: It depends on your objectives and desired outcome. When we are selecting influencers to work with, we understand first if we are trying to increase awareness or

conversion, and which market we need to focus on. If we're targeting China, we aren't going to look into influencers on Instagram, but Weibo or WeChat. If we're looking into the US market and want to increase awareness, we're probably going to go with Instagram. So, it all depends on these factors.

Farzana: *The majority of people believe that Instagram is best suited for influencer marketing. Would you agree with that?*

Interviewee 1: Again, it depends (laugh). If you want to create something visual and that's where your community and target is, then absolutely. If your target audience is on Facebook, then you want to select someone who is on Facebook not on Instagram.

Farzana: *What do you think about that Sharan?*

Interviewee 2: : I have the same view. For me, you choose the audience and then based on the audience you choose the influencer. It's not on which platform they are., it's always based on who you want to reach. In some cases, it can be even on YouTube. You really need to focus on your target audience. I don't have a straight answer either.

Q8: *Would you say that it has been effective so far to do influencer marketing?*

Interviewee 2: So far yes, it has been effective. If you use it in the right way, yes it has been effective.

Farzana: *So, you would say that it has a positive effect on ROI?*

Interviewee 2: Absolutely yes. For me, on every calculation of how we do traditional media buying versus influencers strategies... so yes there is an interesting mix.

Farzana: *You mentioned trust issues before between influencers and customers. I also made a survey with Millennials in Swiss Romandie and so far, only 27% of them said that they really trust them, and I have a majority who doesn't really trust them. So, as there are trust issues do you think it has an impact on sales in that case?*

Interviewee 2: So far, we haven't been able to make an assessment that is linked to a specific influencer but because of the way we do our activations, we are able to justify a specific type of activation but I wouldn't say... we have yet gone to the analysis of what asset made that sale. But, as I said, it's usually linked to how we activate our campaign. Of course, as Susanne said, we have those big blockbusters influencers, they do have direct impact on sales, obviously. But for the micro... I don't have let's say an explicit figure or even analysis that say even micro-influencers do have an impact on the sales.

Q9: *Where do you see Piaget in 10 years with that strategy? With influencer marketing? Do you think it will take over other marketing strategies?*

Interviewee 1: I don't think it will take over, but I hope that in the future we have more structure on how to use influencers. At the moment, we are more focusing on those blockbusters' kind of influencers like Olivia Palermo to get the message out. We are working towards setting up a strategy that can be replicated and integrated both locally and globally.

Farzana: *Locally? So, you mean by country?*

Interviewee 1: Exactly. Right now, there are two kind of influencers. We work with those who are at blockbuster level, they cover various territories, but they are effective for brand image and awareness. However, we also need to also capitalize on smaller, more local influencers for example in France, we are doing an activation and we need to cover for that market. It will have more impact to have someone who is local that resonates with the market.

Q10: *What do you think in general about influencer marketing? What is your opinion about this?*

Interviewee 1: It's interesting. I think at the heart of it, it should be a relationship based... It's kind of mix between PR, social and marketing. It's an interesting time to be in the digital communications world. So much is changing and it's really exciting to be a part of it.

Interviewee 2: For me, on my side, because I have seen evolution of new channels. Over the last 7 years I would say SM was that shiny element... 6-7 years ago we had SM strategies, now it has become more like a basis on doing digital marketing. And now, influencer marketing is the new digital thing which is quite new... I don't know if it will become like a norm that everybody does because there is a lot of things that are still in a grey area, and the fact that there is... Let's say having done this and having done some studies on my way as well, in my previous job, there is a little bit of let's say... trust issues with influencers on SM. Because customers don't know if it's an organic post that they are doing or if it's a brand that is paying behind it, especially after all the scandals that happened for the last one year, with the fire festival. There are still some things, I don't know if it will become you know... a norm. It's still new for me to make a judgment for a long-term point of view.

Appendix 3: Qualitative questions for Millennials

Name:

Age:

Profession:

Study:

Date:

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
2. Please describe what the term “influencer” means to you.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
6. How did you get to know about them? (randomly, friends, page)

Connection/attachment with influencers

7. How long have you been following them?
8. Would you continue following them in the future? If yes, why?
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

Purchase behavior

13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it? If yes, why? If not, why?
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
15. Would you consider buying a luxury product endorsed by influencers?
16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

General opinion about influencer marketing

17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

Appendix 4: Qualitative research interviewees' profile

N°	Name	Gender	Age	Profession	Nationality	Influencers	Category of influencers	Purchase behavior	Platform
1	William	M	26	Consultant	English	James Smith & Hungry Tourist	Fitness & Food	Yes	Instagram
2	Gahigi	M	30	Bank	Swiss	No names	Food, Fitness and Comedy	No	Instagram
3	Diana	F	24	Receptionist	French	Nicolas Stagic & Sissy MUA	Photography & Beauty	Yes	Instagram & YouTube
4	Chris	M	34	Head of students	English	David Beckham & Joe Wicks	Sports & Fitness	Yes	Instagram
5	Nina	F	27	Administrative assistant	Swiss	Bigwill & Aline Perrisol	Food & Beauty	No	Instagram
6	Melanie	F	28	Insurance agent	Portuguese/ Swiss	Amrezy & Camila Coelho	Beauty	Yes	Instagram & YouTube
7	Luca	M	26	Vendor	Swiss/Italian	Philip Demi & Sean O'Pry	Fashion	Yes	Instagram
8	Joanna	F	24	Student	Spanish	Olivia Palermo & Katie Giorgadze	Fashion & Lifestyle	Yes	Instagram & Facebook
9	Paolo	M	28	Manager	Swiss/ Spanish	David Beckham	Sports	Yes	Instagram
10	David	M	25	Student	Swiss	Lost LeBlanc & Mark Wien	Lifestyle, Travel and Food	Yes	YouTube
11	Ana	F	24	Language assistant	Swiss	Chiara Ferragni & Emelie (Emitaz)	Fashion & Lifestyle	No	Instagram
12	Guillaume	M	34	Accountant	French/ Swiss	Zinedine Zidane & Miranda Kerr	Sports & Fashion	Yes	Instagram & Twitter
13	Zaid	M	32	Unemployed	Pakistani	Hasan Minhaj	Comedy	No	YouTube
14	Elisa	F	25	Student	Italian/ Swiss	Mike Varshavski & Sherry Maldonado	Medicine & Beauty	No	Instagram
15	Bruno	M	27	Waiter	Portuguese	Cristiano Ronaldo	Sports	Yes	Instagram & Facebook
16	Besma	F	27	Secretary	Albanian/ Swiss	Tara Milk Tea & Victoria Beckham	Fashion & Lifestyle	No	Instagram
17	Yasmine	F	31	Vendor	French	Chiara Ferragni & Jeffree Star	Beauty, Fashion & Lifestyle	Yes	Instagram
18	Alex	M	28	Finance	Swiss	Bradly Simmonds & Roger Federer	Sports & Fitness	No	Instagram

Appendix 5: Qualitative research answers

Interviewee 1: William, 26 years old, Consultant, 12.04.2019 at 11:00

18. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
19. Please describe what the term “influencer” means to you.
Somebody which is followed by a lot of people on Social Media.
20. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, but very rarely.
21. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
James Smith: He is a personal trainer. Someone who shows everything bad in the fitness and health industry.
Hungry Tourist: Someone who speaks about food all around the world and I like seeing it because gives me ideas to travel.
22. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter).
Only Instagram.
23. How did you get to know about them?
Through Instagram, I think it was randomly. It appeared on my feed.
24. How long have you been following them?
I think about a year for both of them.
25. Would you continue following them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, because they provide good content. They are not trying to sell anything bad.
26. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
No, I only see them on my feed and I only like, I don't comment.
27. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Yes, for example James is young, lively who tries to show people that you don't have to buy misleading products to lose weight. He cuts the “bullshit” out of the fitness industry. He is someone who is very concerned about people.
Hungry Tourist: He is a lively person who sold his company and now travel all around the world and show people the food, restaurants in countries. He gives me ideas. He is someone friendly.
28. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Not at all. They are not my friends. We have similarities but I don't particularly feel connected to them in any way.
29. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
James Smith: I would trust him because one of my friends is very good friend with him so I could partially trust him.
Hungry Tourist: No, I don't really know him, but I would go to places he promotes.
30. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
If it's James not really because I don't need to. He does program for people who doesn't have ideas about fitness. I don't use that because I do my own thing at fitness. Hungry Tourist: he doesn't sell anything, but I would go to the places he shows because they look interesting.
31. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, fitness products, protein, twice, I think.
32. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

Not necessarily. I would need to be more interested in the luxurious product in the first place.

33. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

I prefer going to the shop. I went to buy my fitness products in shops. I go to the shop to try it and then I buy online because it's cheaper. Mostly for clothes.

34. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

I think the most part of products which are promoted on social media, are misleading because they are low quality of products. They are trying to target a large audience and trying to sell them anything.

Interviewee 2: Gahigi, 30, Bank, Swiss, 23.04.2019

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

Yes

2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.

Someone who posts photos and videos on social media, who gives advice but not always. Someone who shows himself and tries to influence others.

3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)

Yes, but not frequently.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)

I mostly follow the ones for food which gives me ideas to eat healthy. Also, fitness for workout. I also like comedians who makes me laugh through their shows or video.

5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)

Instagram only.

6. How did you get to know about them?

Randomly because they appear on my feed.

7. How long have you been following them?

About two years, I think.

8. Would you continue following them in the future? If yes, why?

Yes, if it still interests me to see what they do.

9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?

Yes, I always check their stories, but I never go on their page. I never comment but it happens that I like it.

10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?

I can tell for the ones I know but for others it's difficult to say. I think they don't show the real image of themselves; they just project a perfect image. Some of them seems real though.

11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)

Yes, if it's a comedian and he make me laugh. Sometimes he says joke and I feel like I can laugh with him and with my friends.

12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

It depends on what. If someone says if you do this and you get that and that's something which seems not real, I won't believe them. People are foolish.

Even if I trust them, I'll always look somewhere else to be sure. If they are expert in their field or have enough experience, they I would trust them.

13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?

No, I wouldn't buy unless it interests me, and I really like it or need it.

14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
No, never. I'm not someone who look out genuinely to buy something on social media.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
No, I wouldn't. Like I said that's not my intention on social media.
16. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
I prefer to go to the shop to try it unless it's a certified or a known brand.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
It's a new way which is more direct. We get the information even if we don't ask for it. It appears on our feed. I think it's a must for businesses to do it because young people are on social media. Also, it allows influencers to make a name for themselves.

Interviewee 3: Diana, 24, receptionist, French, 02.02.2019 at 16:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes, I follow some on Instagram.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
People who show their lifestyle on social media. They influence people to buy things.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, once in a while when I like someone.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
They are French and people who talk about fashion. Lifestyle, travel.
Photographer: Nicolas Stagic, from Geneva. He takes photography of portrait and landscape; he shows a lot of travel destinations. He does partnerships with travel agencies. Fitness: Sissy MUA a makeup artist who doe free sport program. She does partnership for sports clothes, and fitness food.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Instagram and YouTube.
6. How did you get to know about them?
A friend talked to me about Nicolas and I started following him when he was at the beginning of his career. Sissy I found on YouTube when I was looking for makeup video.
7. How long have you been following them?
Nicolas for less than a year and Sissy about 4 years I would say.
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, because they always find interesting content to show which keep you liking them and following them. They always have something new to offer.
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I like their posts, I check their stories regularly, but I don't comment.
10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Yes. I can the type of person they are. There are some traits are visible. For example, I can tell Sissy is a funny person, who lives in her terms, simple, open spirit.
Nicolas, I think is a perfectionist and greedy (laughing).
11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol).
I think they are like normal people who have found their passion and live with it. I do not find myself in them. Maybe in their character I can find myself but not in what they do. I love photography so I follow Nicolas.

12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
Yes, I do trust them. They seem to be honest in their way to communicate with us.
13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Yes, I would buy.
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, only 3 times. I bought clothes and makeup.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
I'm not a luxurious person but if there are any kind of offer, I would consider it.
16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
A direct link to the website and order online is better option for me.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I think it's a way to make money easily for them (business). I think it's not good to always promote, time to time it's okay. I wouldn't like to always see on a post that the influencer is doing partnership. So if they are always promoting something on every posts then I would get bored.

Interviewee 4: Chris, 34, English, Head of students, 16.04.2019,

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
Influencer will literally promote any products that pay them whether they believe it or not. It's not real all the time. I think people like more sports influencers.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, but I don't look out for anyone. It usually appears on my feed.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
David Beckham: I would buy anything he would promote. He has a fashion company in London, and I bought 3 of their shirts.
Health, fitness: Joe Wicks. I did a health plan by seeing his. He promotes his own products, not someone else's though.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Only Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them?
Beckham, I know him since my childhood. I have grown up seeing him playing football.
Wicks: I think I saw him on TV.
7. How long have you been following them?
Beckham since my childhood but on Instagram since I have Instagram.
The other one about 1 year.
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, Beckham because I have followed him since I was a kid. The body coach because of the results he promised to deliver for a good price. I saw results by following his plan.
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I regularly check their profiles and like, but I never comment.
10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Yes, Beckham I can definitely say is family oriented.
Wicks: Someone who believes in his brand, he's trying to prove that his brands work. I would say he is someone dedicated.
11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)

- Yes, Beckham as an idol and the other one not so much.
12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
Yes, because I have used the products he promotes before and they were good. Body coach he delivered promises and that worked for me, so I trust him.
 13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Yes, I would buy it.
 14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, a lot mostly from Beckham, shoes and t-shirts.
 15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
Probably not. Even if it's Beckham who is promoting it I probably wouldn't because of the price.
 16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
Website, because sometimes products are limited edition and I don't want to risk not getting it.
 17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I like it. I have bought more than once so I trust it and it makes me less worried about the price. I think it's a clever way to sell, it makes people more comfortable with the price because sometimes you think things are expensive but when someone endorse them and you like it you would buy it.

Interviewee 5: Nina, 27, Swiss, Administrative assistant, Swiss, 03.04.2019

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
Someone who earns money through social media, mostly Instagram and snapchat by promoting products.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, it happens, once in a while but I would say very rarely
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
There is one influencer who talks about makeup and beauty, it's Aine Perrissol and another one is more about food and that is Bigwill.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
On Instagram
6. How did you get to know about them?
From a friend who talked to me about the beauty influencer and the other one randomly it appeared on my feed.
7. How long have you been following them?
I would say about 5 years and the other one more than a month.
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
No, I don't think so because I think I'll get bored. You see, it's always the same thing that they are showing so and I'm not interested.
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
No, I do not personally check their profiles every day. I watch their stories. I never like or comment.
10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
No, I wouldn't know the type of person they are. I think it's just an image that they project of themselves but it's not real.

11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
No! Not in any sense.
12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
No, I don't trust them. I don't believe in everything they show us. At the end of the day they are doing business, and this is pure marketing.
13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
No, I wouldn't because I don't trust online sales and I don't necessarily know the brands they promote. I am very selective when it comes to buying things, so I won't jump just because someone promotes it and it looks good.
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Never.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
If I know the brand and if I have a special offer on a brand that I know I might consider buying it.
16. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
I can buy online if I know that I can return it if I don't like it. I can also go to the store if it's nearby and try it.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

I think it's good. When I look for something, I check sometimes check Instagram even if I don't necessarily buy it in that way. I think in a business point of view if a brand doesn't have Instagram then it's not a good thing for them. They have to choose carefully the influencers who promote their brands by keeping its image and reputation.

Interviewee 6: Melanie, 27, Insurance agent, Portuguese/Swiss, 09.05.2019 at 15:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes of course, that's the thing now on Instagram.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
Well, it's someone who tries to influence you by promoting products and basically an influencer will want you to buy it. They give you ideas.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I do follow some. When I like someone, it happens that I follow that person.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
I love make up so the first one that I follow is Amrezy. She's a make-up guru. She's really good at what she does. She promotes make up and everything related to beauty, but also clothes and accessories.
Then there is Camila Coelho. Everything I learned about make up is from her. I used to watch her videos to learn how to do make up. At first, she was a normal person, but slowly she became famous. Now she attends fashion shows, travels the world. She endorses many things just like Amrezy.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Mostly on Instagram but I also follow Camila on YouTube.
6. How did you get to know about them?
I can't remember how I got to know about them, but I think I saw someone else following them. They appeared on my feed most probably or maybe I saw them on a brand page.
7. How long have you been following them?
A long time. I think more than 4 years both.
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?

Yes, I would. I think they are self-made amazing women. They are here today because of their hard work and I admire them for that.

9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?

Yes, but most of them they appear of my feed. I don't have to go and find them. I like mostly, I have rarely commented unless I tagged a friend to show her something.

10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?

I think they are both nice people. Camila seems to be more genuine and more natural I would say than Amrezy.

11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)

Among them I think I can relate more to Camila than Amrezy. I don't think she tries that hard to impress people. She has that personality that attracts people to her and she's really a beautiful woman, naturally.

12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

It's difficult to say but I would say yes. So far, everything they promoted are I think well-known by people and judging by all the lovely comments people leave on their posts, I would say that people admire them, so yes there is a kind of trust built with the audience.

13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?

Yes of course. Common it's Camila and Amrezy (laugh).

14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?

Yes, I have, mostly make up and it happened accessories like watch or bags. I bought once an expensive bag that I saw on Camila to reward myself after finding a new job. It happens to me to buy time to time when I like something or when I need it.

15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

If you're talking about products which costs more than a 1000 CHF, I don't think I'll buy it. I can get influenced and like it but I'm not going to buy something just because someone told me it's good or because it looks good. I can make my own decisions. Like I said I can have ideas and maybe consider it later but I'm not going to buy it just because Camila is endorsing it. Though I envy her closet.

16. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

Well both. It depends on what I'm buying. Sometimes I buy things online because it's more affordable or because I don't have it here in Geneva.

17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

I think it's great. Not everyone can manage to do it even though a lot of people nowadays are trying to it. It's a great way for brands to promote their products. And for influencers, it's a great way to make money. For some, it's a job.

Interviewee 7: Luca, 26, Vendor, Swiss/Italian, 13.05.2019 at 14:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

Yes, I have.

2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.

Someone who tries to influence you to do something or buy something.

3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)

Yes, I follow sometimes.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)

There is this guy that I recently saw on a page. He's name is Philip Demi and he's from Germany. I started following him few months ago because his style is great. He promotes style.

Then there is Sean O'pry who is a model. He has a cool feed where he just not only posts his modelling photos but also about his life, like his dog.

5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Both on Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
Philip, I saw him on that fashion page that I follow few months ago I started following him since then. Sean O'pry more than a year. I think I saw him endorsing Calvin Klein underwear.
7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, I would. They both gives me idea regarding fashion. I get inspired from them.
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I sometimes go to check their profile otherwise I see them on my feed.
9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
They both seem cool. Philip seems enjoy doing what he does. And I really like him, because he promotes affordable clothes as well as expensive.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
I can relate to their personality maybe. They seem to be funny just like me (laugh). Otherwise, I don't see any connections.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
I don't know if they are genuine. I like them by what I can see but I don't think I trust them like I trust my friends.
12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Yes, I would.
13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, if happened to me to buy clothes that Philip endorsed from Zalando. I think I bought twice.
14. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
Not sure about that. It will depend on my need and the price. If it's too expensive then I can't afford it. I think like most of the people, I also want some luxury things in my life but like most of the people I don't have the ability. I think it's for a certain group of people. But nowadays anyone can have a luxury pair of shoes or belt or bag for women.
15. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
I mostly like to go to a shop and try things. Otherwise, sometimes it happens to me to buy online.
16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
This is pure marketing which seems to work pretty well that's why everyone is trying their luck in it. I see so many young people of my age or even younger who tries to become famous through this. This is cool for brands. I don't think they have to spend that much money for this than for an ad on TV.

Interviewee 8: Joanna, 24, Student, Spanish, 02.05.2019 at 10:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

- Yes.
2. Please describe what the term “influencer” means to you.
An influencer is someone who is on social media I think and who promotes products for brands. They have followers and sometimes a lot who follow them through their journey.
 3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I do follow when I like someone.
 4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
Yes, I follow for instance Olivia Palermo who started in a show on MTV if I remember well. She promotes fashion, lifestyle. Then there is Katie Giordadze who is a fashion blogger. Her feed is amazing and dreamy. When I first saw it, I was like wow this is so beautiful. She always has beautiful photos in different places.
 5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Both on Instagram. I prefer Instagram because it's better to see the photos even though Olivia has a Facebook page. I first started following her on Facebook then Instagram.
 6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
Olivia, I have known her from the TV show on MTV, the City it's called. Since then I liked her. And when I created an Instagram account, I went to follow her. I find her interesting and inspiring. I want to know what she does in her life. Katie, I think I saw her post on my feed. It was randomly and I really liked her feed as I said. It's beautiful.
 7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, I would. Olivia seems to be someone genuine. Well I have seen her on TV and liked her since then. I like how she portrays herself and how far she's come since her debut on TV is pretty amazing. Katie I would continue follow her because of her photos. It's good to see pretty things. And also, because she gives me idea of places to visit. I tried to take pictures like her in Paris when I went to visit. Unfortunately for me it didn't turned out to be as good as hers.
 8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I do check mostly for Katie more than Olivia. But you know with Instagram, now you don't have to look for things, they come to you.
 9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
I think both of them are very friendly. Katie seems to be a sweet person and her personality can be seen through her posts. She seems to care a lot about details and aesthetic. Olivia is more known than Katie with million of followers, she's famous and she knows it.
 10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Yes, I could relate to Olivia when I was younger. Now I think we both have matured since then. I admire her for her achievements. Katie well, we both like photography so I feel like we are connected through it. I feel like we have similar taste.
 11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
I think they are both trustworthy. I mean they know that people are not fool and won't hesitate to put them down if they do something wrong.
 12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?

Yes probably.
 13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
I bought once a belt I saw on Olivia. I saw it on other people or celebrities too and I wanted it, so I bought it. I don't know if she was endorsing it, but she tagged the brand.
 14. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

I am a student so I don't think I can't afford luxury in my life right now. I like luxury items and sometimes I want to have this bag or this belt, but I can't afford it for now.

15. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

I prefer to go to the shop and see it for myself. The experience is different than online. But it happened that I ordered online clothes or shoes.

16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

I think it's an interesting way to promote things. We young people watch less TV now or look at a banner. We are always on our phones so yes, it's a good way to promote for brands and for people to have their moment of fame.

Interviewee 9, Paolo, 28, Manager, Swiss/Spanish, 11.05.2019 at 13:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

Yes

2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.

To me, an influencer sounds like a celebrity. Someone with enough fame to make a difference to this world.

3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)

I follow football and I have always looked up to David Beckham. I follow him on social media.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)

David Beckham is probably the only influencer I tend to follow. He has been an exceptional athlete, a true gentleman and since retiring from football, he has been using his fame and part of his wealth to make the world a better place. Although he mostly promotes fashion, but I was really impressed with his campaign against malaria.

5. Through which channels do you follow him? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)

Mostly, Instagram.

6. How did you get to know about him?

If you follow football or like it as a sport, you are bound to know David Beckham, such is his stature. I first got to know about him during the 2002 FIFA World Cup where England was playing against Argentina.

7. How long have you been following him?

I always used to see him play and have tried to copy his haircut a few times, only to fail. It's safe to say I have been following him more since his retirement in 2013.

8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?

Of course. I wish more athletes would turn out to be like him once they retire, given the amount of money they get paid on a weekly basis. David Beckham is one of a kind.

9. Do you regularly look out at what he does? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?

I do refrain from posting comments but yes, I often check his stories or posts.

10. Can you tell which type of person he is through his posts, his communication and the way he presents himself?

Seeing his interviews and the way he presents himself; I can tell he is a nice man although we shouldn't be judging anyone based on their social media activities. But life becomes easier when you have money I guess and is easier to behave as well.

11. Do you feel connected to him? How do you see him, how do you feel about him? (ex: friends, idol).

When I was in high school, I felt more connected to him. His hairstyles over the years did shape mine too. You can say I was going through a phase, but to this day, I still follow him.

12. Can you say that you can trust him? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

Yes, I do trust him. Even with such fame and wealth, he still maintains a family of five and is a role model for all young footballers and my trust with it.

13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
I think I already have tried two products endorsed by David Beckham. His perfume and one shampoo.
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
I came across the shampoo endorsed by David Beckham on social media and his perfume and I bought them.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by influencers?

Certainly. The more famous they are, the easier it is for them to lure customers towards a certain product. Look at Tudor watches, they are endorsed by David Beckham. I never considered Tudor to be exceptional.

16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
I always prefer going to a store and buying it, however, if the price is better online and there are certain deals associated, I would shop over the internet.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
Effective. It seems like it is probably the best way to get your products consumed.

Interviewee 10: David, 25, Student, Swiss, 11.03.2019 at 13:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term “influencer” means to you.
In my opinion, an influencer can be regarded as someone who I would aspire to be. He/she would have some sort of an influence in my day to day life depending on what they are trying to influence.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes. Regularly. I have always been a food eater and have grown to be a fan of food bloggers. Every night before sleeping I end up watching a vlog on YouTube of a person who travels for food.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
Lost Le Blanc and Mark Wien. Both of them promote travelling while the latter has more contents on the various cuisines related to the places he visits. Both of them has their own YouTube channel and the quality of their content does set them apart. Its easy to say that initially I did not enjoy it as much but over time I grew into it and made me realize how being a traveler is better than to be a tourist.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Primarily, YouTube, although both of them have their own Instagram and Facebook pages.
6. How did you get to know about them?
I got to know about them while looking for food and travel related videos on YouTube.
7. How long have you been following them?
Me and my friends were thinking about what to order for dinner. We couldn't make up our mind that day and randomly went to YouTube and searched food and came across Mark Wiens. It did not help but at least I found something that I will forever be following.
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
For sure. The subject of their vlogs is infinite and hope they will continue producing amazing travel and food videos.
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?

I have subscribed to their channels and have turned on post notification so everytime they upload a new video; I am straight on to it if I am free or at least know look forward to seeing it.

10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?

It's quite hard to judge exactly how one influencer could be in real life but looking at Mark Wiens and his videos, I can tell that he is a family man and his wife and kid often travels with him to different places to try different cuisines. He is quite friendly and make people comfortable around him specially since he is always having a camera with him.

11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)

I cannot say I do feel connected with them, but yes, they have some sort of influence in my life. For e.g. Mark Wiens comes from Thailand and I have seen lots of Thai Street Food videos and did try few of them when I was visited Bangkok, Thailand. I wouldn't say that I would one day become a food/ travel vlogger, but it does fascinate me a lot to be honest.

12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

Yes, I do trust these two abovementioned influencers. The number one reason I could trust them is because of the quality of their content. It quite transparent and both of them have over a million subscribers around the globe.

13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?

If they endorse a product, it would be a bit unrealistic and make it look a bit commercial, however, given that I have been a follower for a while, I would still look into the product and make a rational decision.

14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?

Yes, I once bought a cap promoted by an influencer. That was the only time I felt I needed a cap and it looked pretty cool since it had my favorite football club's logo on it.

15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

Yes. However, I am a student and don't have the money right now to buy luxury.

16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

Due to the convenience of buying, I prefer buying on the internet. Also, since I do not get much time to go to the shop except for groceries.

17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

It's a marketing strategy. It is effective when the right group of people is targeted.

Interviewee 11: Ana, Language assistant / receptionist. Swiss 11.03.2019

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

Yes

2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.

People that are advertising a product or a service by a brand and get paid or get a commission on the sales done.

3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)

Yes, very rarely.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favourites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)

Most of them are related to the fashion industry.

Chiara Ferragni: she is Italian, has created a brand and developed her name internationally. She started writing a blog on fashion and brands, then she became a model and then she created her own brand. Her business model has been studied by the Harvard Business School. She is a mom and business women. I love her style and

I think she is a good example of values and vision that I share and a model. As she is well known, she is promoting expensive/luxury products, hotels.

Emelie (@Emitaz on ig) : she is younger than the first one so I can identify myself more to her. She started doing vlogs on her YouTube channel. Now she is promoting a lot of affordable brands as Mango. In every post, she is very natural and spontaneous, she is sharing a lot of her life and she has a style similar to mine.

5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Instagram only
6. How did you get to know about them?
Through Instagram. They randomly appeared on my feed.
7. How long have you been following them?
More than 5 years
8. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, because they are either an inspiration or a person to whom I can easily relate to.
9. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I look at their post and stories every day, I like their posts almost every time but never comment.
10. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Yes, I think they are nice women. As I said before, Chiara is a person who has her morals and values and I admire that.
11. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Yes, most of them, either inspiration or I feel like they could be my friends.
12. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
I would not say that I trust them.
13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Not necessarily. I should first like the product, but I won't buy it only because they are promoting it.
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
No, never and I don't think I will.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
No, not at all. I prefer buy on my own my things.
16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
If it is a luxury item I like to go to the store, if it is something small or not expensive then online is okay.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I think now, a lot of people are living from these endorsements, it has become a job. I don't have a particular opinion if it is good or not, but I know I will not buy an expensive product only because an influencer is promoting it.

Interviewee 12: Guillaume: 34, Accountant, French/Swiss, 03.04.2019 at 18:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
Someone famous or maybe not famous at first but they become famous eventually, I guess. And that person has influencer over people.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I would say yes. It happens to me to follow influencers or famous people time to time.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
Miranda Kerr and Zinedine Zidane. Miranda Kerr has been a VS Model. She is the best of all time for me. Each time I see her, I'm mesmerized like the first time I saw her. She's really attractive. I love her (laugh). Zizou (Zinedine Zidane) on the other hand, is a legend. Coming from a France, I have seen how he united a whole nation when he won the World Cup in 1999, having Algerian roots. It was quite remarkable.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
Instagram and sometimes Twitter but it's mostly Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them?
One of my friends told me about Victoria Secrets angels back in 2009. I think there used to be a show on TV as well, that's how I get to know about her. It happened to me to go internet and see her photos (laugh). But now I follow her on Instagram. And Zidane, I have known him from football.
7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
No doubt. Forever. I think they are amazing. Miranda for example is now doing business. If not mistaken she has her own beauty products which is very impressive. And Zidane, he is a legend. You cannot unfollow him (laugh).
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
Whenever I get time, they come across my newsfeed but don't really search to see their content. I do like sometimes, but I don't comment.
9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
I can certainly tell that they are into fitness, even Zidane at this age, has kept himself quite fit. Other than that, I can't really. I don't know them in a personnel level. I know them through what they decide to show to the public, but I can, based on that make assumptions. For example, Miranda she seems to be a kind soul and very charming.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Not so much of a connection, rather a fan. I am just a fan I would say. Maybe yes, being a fan it's like a connection.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
Yeah, it's quite easy to do so. They both have a huge fan base. When you have so many people who are looking at you or who idolize you, I think the least you can do it's to give them back this love and being real.
12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Yes, if Miranda Kerr endorses a product, I may consider buying that for my girlfriend though I haven't yet bought anything from her. I have bought Victoria's secret lingerie, but I bought the one I saw on Adriana Lima (laugh).
13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
I have not yet purchased from such a platform. Maybe I can say that I have been influenced by what I see but I wouldn't say that I directly bought something that I saw someone endorsing.
14. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
I may if I like the product and it's really a good deal.
15. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
Online. Its easier that way nowadays. I don't have much time to go to a store and shop there.
16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I think it's good Marketing Strategy. It helps brands to have more visibility and to be known. And about the influencers? Well I guess it became like a job now. They promote

products to make money. I don't think they use everything they show. But then, it's with hard work that they have managed to have an audience, so they deserve the money they earn.

Interviewee 13: Zaid, 32, Unemployed, Pakistani, 21.03.2019 at 15:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
An influencer is someone who can lead a group of people. Basically, someone who change the way you look at something.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
I do not have Facebook or Instagram, but I have always used YouTube and have recently came across Hasan Minhaj. I regard him as a political commentator, and he does interest me in the way he views politics as a whole. It's quite funny.
4. Through which channels do you follow him? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
YouTube.
5. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
I can only talk about Hasan Minhaj is a comedian to begin with. That's what I feel. But most of his contents relate to his views towards Donald Trump and not to mention the earth as a whole. Current affairs basically.
6. How did you get to know about them?
I first saw one of his shows on Netflix at a friend's place last year.
7. How long have you been following him?
Since January this year.
8. Would you continue follow him in the future? If yes, why?
Yeah. His shows are entertaining and full of information and knowledge I suppose. And he's also a funny guy.
9. Do you regularly look out at what he does? Do you regularly go on YouTube to check if he has uploaded a video?
Yes, whenever there is a new show, I end up watching it even if the title of the video doesn't seem interesting at first. I'm subscribed to his channel.
10. Can you tell which type of person she is through his communication and the way he presents himself?
He is a fine actor as far as I can see. I can't really ascertain what type he could be really, but he seems a very nice person and funny.
11. Do you feel connected to him? How do you see him, how do you feel about him? (ex: friends, idol)
I don't really feel any connection. It's just a sort of entertainment for me. He's just a celebrity for me and nothing else.
12. Do you trust him? If yes, how do you think he can be trusted?
Well, I do not trust him, but he does make sense most of the time. I don't think you can fully trust someone you don't know. It's just an image that they project. I don't think that's the real them that we get to see.
13. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
I don't think I would, given that he is still a comedian and not the type of person who would endorse a product or service. But if one day he starts endorsing products and if that's something that interests me then perhaps yes, I would consider.
14. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
I have not yet purchased anything promoted through social media, perhaps because YouTube has little scope for it since I always end up skipping the ad.
15. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

- No, I don't think so, I have never been that much interested in luxury products.
16. How do you like buying products promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
In-store because I prefer seeing the things I buy and if I can try them.
17. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
Trendy. This what the new generation prefers.

Interviewee 14: Elisa, 25, Student, Italian/Swiss, 16.04.2019 at 14:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
I think it's someone who has followers on social media and who endorses things for brands against money.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I follow some.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
Well there is this doctor on Instagram who has a page and millions of followers. His name is Mike Varshavski and he's really good looking. He literally looks like a model. I think he's mostly famous for his look than his job (laugh). All my friends follow him. He represents many causes, that's why I like him. He tries to raise awareness of many subjects. He's also really entertaining when he gives his opinion on TV shows. Sometimes, he's on magazine and do photoshoots.
Then is Sherry Maldonado that I follow. She talks about hair and skin care. She has amazing hair and she gives different tips and advice about how to maintain them and also shows different hairstyles. I follow her mostly for her hair.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
I follow both of them on Instagram. I don't know if they have a Facebook page. I haven't checked.
6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
For doctor Mike, it's a friend who talked to me about him. I visited his page and I instantly started following him. Sherry, I think I saw her on another page, and I started following her.
7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, I think so. Doctor Mike he's just not good looking. I like the fact that he uses his platform for many causes related to health and medicine. Being a medicine student myself, I find it interesting. I will also continue follow Sherry because she gives great tips about hair and skin.
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
Not really regularly. When I have time. I am kind of very busy with studies, I don't always go myself and look for what they do. No, I don't comment. One day, Sherry did a question and answer session and I asked her a question, but I didn't get any reply.
9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
They both seem very friendly and down-to-earth type of persons to me. More than that I don't know. I can't really say much.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Well, perhaps a little bit with Doctor Mike as I also want to be a doctor. He kind of inspires me a lot and motivates me to study harder.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?

I think I trust them for what I know about them. Maybe Mike more than Sherry because she uses different shampoos, so you never know which one is actually the right one. I believe she has naturally beautiful hair, so whatever she puts will help her.

12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?

I don't know. I can't really say. I mean Sherry once promoted Pantene and I already use it, so I don't know.

13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?

No, I haven't but once I liked a lipstick color on someone and went to buy something similar.

14. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?

I don't think so. I don't have the ability to buy luxury at that moment. And I don't think I'll buy something just because someone tells me it's good or whatever. I can choose for myself.

15. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)

I prefer to go to the store. But nowadays I don't have enough time, so I would go with online.

16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?

Well it's not really my domain but I think in the perspective of a marketer, it's a good way to promote because a lot of people get to see you. For the influencers, it helps them to get more followers and maybe to be more credible.

Interviewee 15: Bruno, 27, Waiter, Portuguese, 08.05.2019

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?

Yes.

2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.

Yes, people who do advertisements for brands on Instagram. They try to make people buy the products by telling them it's good.

3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)

Yes, I follow. Not always, sometimes.

4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)

I follow mostly football player. I don't know if they are considered as influencers, but I believe they inspire and influence their fans. I like Cristiano Ronaldo. He is my favorite football player. He plays amazingly. He's the best. He's always wearing Adidas and Nike and always tagging them, so I guess that's what he promotes.

5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)

I follow him on Facebook and Instagram, but I mostly go on Instagram to check his profile.

6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?

Since my childhood. Following him since I have created an Instagram account.

7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?

Yes, because he's Ronaldo (laugh). I will continue following even after he retires because I want to know what he will become later, what he will do. I am a true fan.

8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?

Yes, I regularly check his profile and his story. I always like his posts but never comment.

9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?

- He's cool and a good guy. I think he's nice and very friendly. I think he is also very family oriented and cares a lot about his children.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
I am a fan so yes; I feel connected to him. I become excited when he plays.
 11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
Yes, I can say that I trust him. He's trustworthy because he managed to make me become his fan by the way he plays and also for who he is.
 12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Yes, I would. In fact, I did buy shoes and a vest that I have seen on him.
 13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, like I said before I did buy shoes. If I bought by seeing someone else, I don't think so, but I do get inspired by people.
 14. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by these influencers?
If Cristiano promotes a Rolex, I don't think I can buy it. I don't have that money, so no I won't. I will stay with what I can afford.
 15. How do you like buying products on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
For the shoes that I bought, I ordered them online. I like both ways. Going to store allow you to try it before buying it.
 16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I think sometimes they take people for fool because we know that they are paid to promote the products. It's not real but then it's a good way to be known. There are always people who will like something and buy it or get inspired.

Interviewee 16: Besma, 27, Secretary, Albanian/Swiss, 05.04.2019 at 19:00

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
Someone who influences people's decisions on something.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I follow some.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
I follow Tara Milk Tea. She's quite a famous blogger. She has the most gorgeous Instagram feed that I have seen. She takes photo by theme and color and visually it's beautiful. She promotes lifestyle and fashion I would say.
Then I like Victoria Beckham. Everyone knows Victoria. She has her own brand. She's a mother and a fashion designer and an entrepreneur at the same time. I like her style and her clothing line is class, but I can't afford it.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
I follow them on Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
Tara Milk Tea appeared on my feed one day. It was a catchy photo that I saw so I went to visit her profile and I was like "wow". This feed is really beautiful.
Victoria, I know her from her husband and Spice Girls.
7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, I would because Tara always have unique and magical photos. And Victoria also because I like her. I think she's very inspirational.
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
Yes, I like their photos, but I never comment.

9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Tara seems to be a fun person who likes to experience new things and who's very dedicated. She always colors her hair according to the theme and color of her photos. I think Victoria is most the most famous Spice Girl. I don't know If it's due to David Beckham, but she seems to be hard-working. I don't know as a person how she is, but she has great style sense.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
Not really. I don't know them. I like seeing their posts or what they do in life, but I don't particularly feel connected to them.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
No, I wouldn't say I trust them. I mean it depends, if they tell me something is good, I won't believe them until I have seen it and judged it myself.
12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
Not really products, but I have visited 2 places that I have seen on Tara's Instagram page.
13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
No, I have never. I get inspired but no I haven't bought anything.
14. Would you consider buying a luxury product endorsed by these influencers?
No, I won't. Though I like luxury, I believe that it is way too expensive for what they offer. You can buy a good leather well made for a reasonable price. You don't need luxury for that.
15. How do you like buying products that are promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
If I see something that I like, I prefer to go to a shop and see it in real and then decide if I want to buy it or not.
16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
I think it's a good way for people to make money and become famous. For brands, it's an opportunity also to show their products to people.

Interviewee 17, Yasmine, 31, Vendor, French, 27.04.2019 at 18:30

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
It's a person who promote products for brands against money on their social media, like Instagram. They have a lot of followers.
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I do.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
Chiara Ferragni. She's a fashion blogger. She promotes fashion and make up. She's the face of Lancôme.
Jeffree Star. He's a makeup artist, YouTuber. So, he's always promoting makeup.
5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
On Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
I saw Chiara on the page of Lancôme. She has I think the same age as me and she's a beautiful woman. I checked her Instagram page and I really liked all her photos. I got curious and looked on internet for her. She's has achieved so much and that's very impressive. Jeffree Star, because I love makeup, so I follow some makeup up artist.

He appeared on another page and I started following him because he's unconventional and inspiring.

7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, I think so, until I get fed up (laugh). They give me ideas about make up.
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
I wouldn't say regularly. But sometimes, it happens that I go to check.
9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Chiara seems to be a strong woman. She has started I think as a blogger and have come thus far. So many people look up to her and I am one of them.
Jeffree is more because he is here for a message. He breaks stereotypes such as makeup is not only for woman, that men can also wear it, put lipstick and wear heels. He lives life on his own terms and don't care about what other things. I think he gives hope and strength to other men out there who maybe struggle to be accepted for who they are. Besides, he's really good at what he does.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
I don't think I feel any connection with them. I admire them for who they are, and it stops here.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
No, I don't trust them. I don't trust people easily and mostly not people I don't personally know.
12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
I did buy some products endorsed by them. Mostly makeup.
13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
Yes, like I said, mostly makeup. It happens to me, time to time.
14. Would you consider buying a luxury product endorsed by these influencers?
No, that I won't. I will buy it if I like it and if I need it to make myself happy.
15. How do you like buying products that are promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
If I have a good price online or a promo, then I order online, other I go to shops.
16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
It's good marketing. It helps people to promote their products to a larger audience and it helps us to know about products or brands we didn't know maybe. For myself, I discovered few makeup brands by following Jeffree.

Interviewee 18, Alex, Finance, Swiss, 27.04.2019 at 18:30

1. Have you ever heard about influencers?
Yes.
2. Please describe what the term "influencer" means to you.
An influencer is someone who has power on your purchase decisions. Simple as that (laugh).
3. Do you follow any influencers? If yes, how frequently? (ex: regularly, once in a while)
Yes, I do.
4. Who are the influencers that you follow? Please talk about your 2 favorites. What do you think they promote? (ex: life style, fashion, travel etc.)
I'm into fitness. So, I follow mostly trainers. There is Bradly Simmonds who is a fitness trainer. He promotes good healthy life. I haven't seen him that much promoting other things. He does time to time. Then there is Roger Federer, known worldwide. He promotes sports clothes and watch.

5. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)
On Instagram.
6. How did you get to know about them? How long have you been following them?
I have grown up seeing Roger playing tennis. I think in Switzerland everyone knows him. Bradly, I discovered him by looking at fitness pages.
7. Would you continue follow them in the future? If yes, why?
Yes, for now yes. I can't tell about the future, but for now I watch Bradley's videos for exercises and Roger because I follow tennis.
8. Do you regularly look out at what they do? (ex: stories, posts, videos, photos) Do you regularly comment and like their posts?
No, really not regularly. Sometimes, I go to check but most of the time it appears on my feed.
9. Can you tell which type of person she/he is through her/his posts, her/his communication and the way she/he presents himself?
Bradley is a cool guy. I think he's true at what he does. I followed some of his advice and I saw good results.
Roger is friendly, we can all tell that. He is someone dedicated and gives his 100% when he plays.
10. Do you feel connected to these persons? How do you see them, how do you feel about them? (ex: friends, idol)
No, I don't feel connected. They are doing their jobs. Bradly gives advice, Federer he entertains us with his tennis.
11. Do you trust these persons? If yes, how do you think they can be trusted?
Yes, I think so. Bradly shows good thing that help a lot of people. I also tried few things he suggested, and it was good. For Roger, I think most of the people trust him as he's Switzerland's sweetheart. I don't trust him blindly, but I would say yes.
12. If they endorse a product, would you buy it?
No, unless I need it and I think it will be good for me.
13. Have you ever bought something that was promoted by an influencer through a social platform? How often?
No, I haven't. I get ideas but I don't directly go to buy because and influencer is promoting it.
14. Would you consider buying a luxury product endorsed by these influencers?
If it's a great deal, I might consider it, otherwise I won't. I buy my things on my own terms.
15. How do you like buying products that are promoted on Social Media? (direct link to the website, go to the store)
I am someone who prefers to go to the store and see things, touch and try it.
16. What do you think about this kind of endorsement?
A great way for brand to promote their products. It has a lot of advantages, it's less costly and you can really choose an influencer based on your target audience. For influencer, it's a way to become famous, to have a name for their own.

Appendix 6: Quantitative research questions

Personal information

1. Your gender
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
2. Your age
 - a. 6-23 (Generation Y)
 - b. 24-38 (Millennials, Generation Y)
 - c. 39-53 (Generation X)
 - d. 54-72 (Baby boomers)
3. Education level
 - a. Highschool
 - b. Diploma
 - c. Bachelor
 - d. Masters and higher
4. Employment status
 - a. Student
 - b. Employed
 - c. Unemployed
 - d. Self-employed

Presence on social media

5. Which of the following social media platform do you use?
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
 - d. Snapchat
 - e. LinkedIn
 - f. Pinterest
 - g. YouTube
 - h. None
 - i. Other
6. Have you ever heard of the term “influencer marketing”?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Do you follow any influencers?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No (If your answer is no, please submit the questionnaire)

Involvement with influencers

8. If you said yes to the previous question, on which platform(s) do you follow them?
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
 - d. Pinterest
 - e. LinkedIn
 - f. YouTube
 - g. Other
9. In which category would you put your 3 favorite influencers?
 - a. Lifestyle
 - b. Fashion
 - c. Travel
 - d. Food
 - e. Music
 - f. Sports
 - g. Fitness
 - h. Other
10. How did you get to know about them?
 - a. Friends
 - b. Families
 - c. Through a brand collaboration
 - d. Sponsored ads on social media
 - e. Randomly
 - f. Other
11. Why do you follow them?
 - a. For their content
 - b. For their numbers of followers
 - c. For their attractiveness
 - d. Because you can relate to them
 - e. For their philanthropic/social work
 - f. Because they are celebrities (actors, singers, athletes etc.)

- g. Other

Connection/attachment and trust

- 12. How often do you check their profiles?
 - a. More than 3 times a day
 - b. Once in a day
 - c. Once in a week
 - d. Once in a month
- 13. I feel connected to the influencers I follow.
 - a. 1 (strongly disagree)
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5 (strongly agree)
- 14. I trust the influencers I follow.
 - a. 1 (strongly disagree)
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5 (strongly agree)
- 15. Would you consider buying a product endorsed by them?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 16. Have you ever bought a product promoted by an influencer on social media?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 17. If you said yes to question 16, on a scale of 1 to 5 how satisfied were you buying this product promoted by an influencer (5 being the highest)?
 - a. 1 (strongly unsatisfied)
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5 (strongly satisfied)

Interest in luxury products

- 18. Would you consider buying a luxurious product endorsed by an influencer?
 - a. Yes

- b. No
19. On a scale of 1 to 5, how interested are you on luxury items (5 being the highest) ?
- a. 1 (strongly disinterested)
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5 (strongly interested)
20. What are the main reasons for you to spend money on luxurious items?
- a. Because I want to impress people around me
 - b. Because it makes me feel good
 - c. Because of high quality
 - d. Because it makes me look great
 - e. Because I want to treat myself
 - f. Because my favorite influencer/celebrity has it
 - g. Other
21. Do you own any luxury watch (priced over 3000 CHF)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
22. If your favorite influencer were to endorse a new line of luxurious watches more affordable (2000-5000 CHF) on Social Media than the usual range of price at which that luxury brand sells, would you consider buying it?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

General questions

23. Which of the following would have a greater influence on your purchasing decision?
- a. Family
 - b. Friends
 - c. Brand loyalty
 - d. Celebrity or influencer
 - e. Other
24. Finally, how would you prefer buying products promoted on Social Media?
- a. Direct link to the website with purchase option
 - b. Go to a store
 - c. Other